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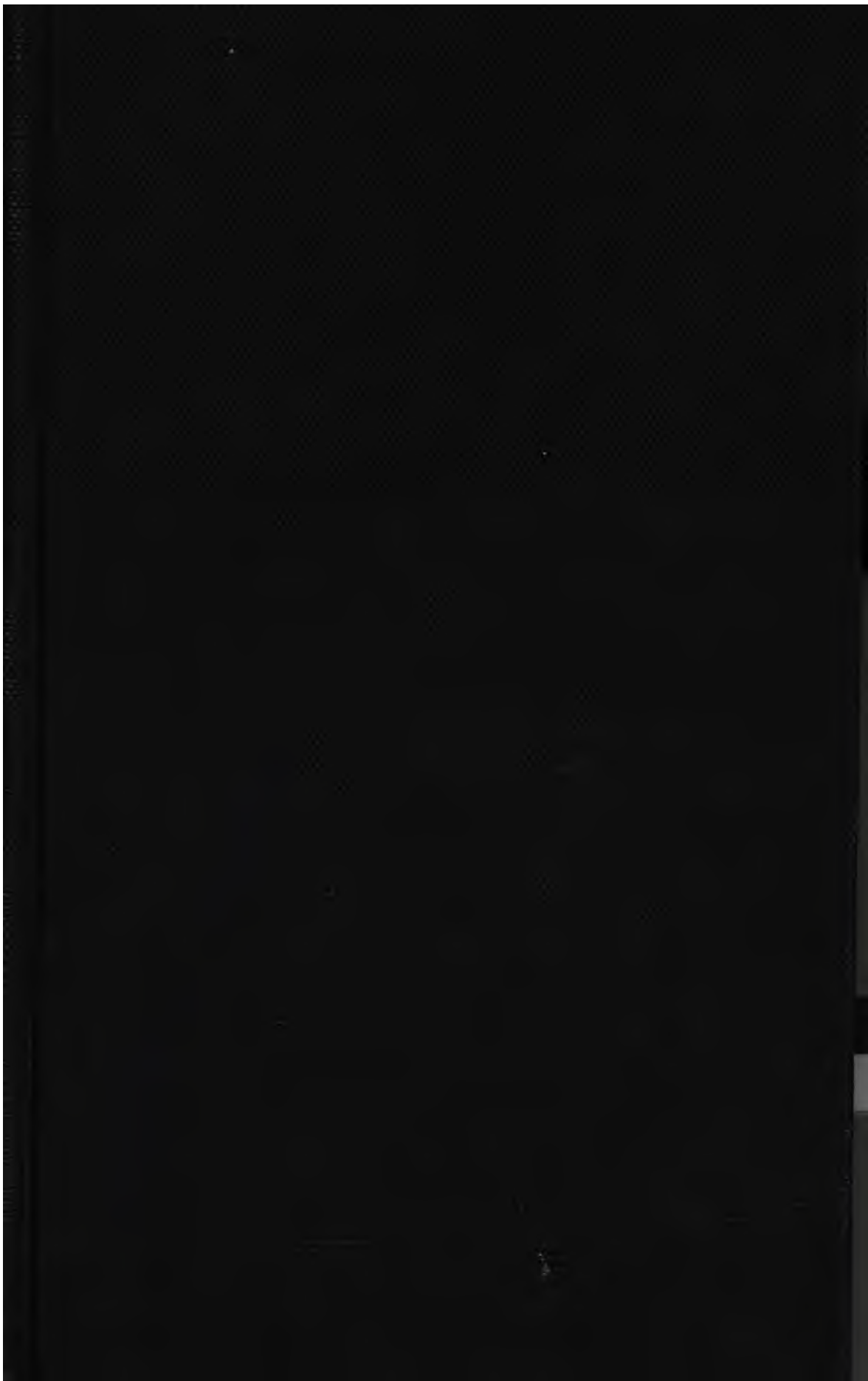
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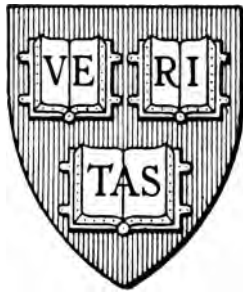
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IV

THE DEFENCE OF

POESIE

&c.



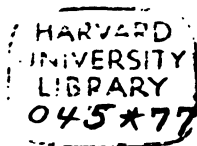
THE DEFENCE OF POESIE
A LETTER TO Q. ELIZABETH
A DEFENCE OF LEICESTER
BY SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

EDITED BY G. E. WOODBERRY



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NOTE

The text of Dr. Ewald Flügel's edition of *The Defence of Poesie* has been made use of by his kind permission. Dr. Flügel has further increased the general Editor's indebtedness to him by personally going over the proofs of this edition, and giving it the benefit of his additional corrections.

L. E.



INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

* *
*



HILIP SIDNEY in this brief book shrined up for immortal memory the riches of Italian humanism, at a great English moment, just before the romantic outburst of his country's "breed of men" eternized the late glory of Elizabeth's reign. It contains the meat on which their intellect was fed; their temper breathes from it; and it is a mirror of their literary accomplishment at the instant. Its obscure origin in a Puritan attack on the playhouses by Stephen Gosson in 1579; its composition about 1583, though it was not published until 1595; its being a controversial pamphlet in the passing war of the theatre or in the more general contest of the purblind party in Europe against the illumination of the new learning, are bibliographical details, interesting but immaterial; for however fortuitous its birth and particular its aim, it at once disclosed the bright metal of those little "golden" books which are among the rarest products of time. It is the first classic—first both in time and in rank—of English criticism; and, happily, its bygone learning, its stylistic devices and quaint terms are steeped in the personality of the best-beloved

Intro- child of his age who had himself slept in the
duction Muses' Bower, and breathes the fragrance of one
of the choicest spirits of mankind. This golden
substance and personal charm united to make
it a precious volume to later English poets, one
of the few books which it is reasonably certain
that they all have read.

In England humanism has no other monument
so shining; neither has it any example so pure.
Sidney's thought is woven, warp and woof, of the
classics and Italy. Such assimilation implies an af-
finity in the thought for the thinker,—it was his
own before he found it; and in Sidney the mind
was humanistic. His nurture had made him al-
most as much the child of European civilization
as he was the son of an old English stock. If Italy
threw such graces on Surrey's noble mind that
men see in his verse the grey streaks of the new
dawn, in Sidney

“Hyperion's march they spy, and glittering
shafts of war.”

He was as well educated as Milton in the next
age, as deeply imbued with delightful studies,
though his mind was less richly stored; and Sur-
rey and Milton were the morning and evening
of Italian humanism in England. Sidney was a
complete example of its modifying power on the
genius of his country. He had his Latin and French
by the age of twelve, and by twenty he had al-

most ended his travels on the Continent, where he had imbibed language, literature and knowledge in many kinds, to return home fitted to become one of the best masters of learning in the kingdom, and well on in the journey. His curiosity was unbounded; he was as inquiring as he was observant; and his mind had singular adhesiveness,—everything stuck to it. He had more than intelligence; he was as quick with sensibility and imagination. He was more than assimilative; he was naturally imitative, and a creator in his turn. He was a stimulating presence, an agitating influence; everything, where he was, became a living question. He was no anachronism lingering superfluous on the Field of the Cloth of Gold; no fading knight, the afterglow of things and ways departed from the stirring world, the player of a half æsthetic part. Sidney was a man of power. He showed this in inferior ways; he was proud, quick to rebuke, loud-voiced to fling back an earl's insult; and in superior ways he showed it by the equivalence of really great matters in his thoughts. He was a man of affairs, but he still habitually moved in the whole of life; and to him there was a like importance in the discovery of the Americas, the consolidation of Protestant power, the growth of an English stage or even the refinement of the vernacular so as to make its broad syllables yield up their organ notes and its light vowels their flute-like move-

Intro- ment. His influence was at all points enlivening,
duction and he had Shelley's instinct for putting his first
thoughts and new loves to immediate use and
practice. So, though young, he expressed him-
self fully. In the *Arcadia* he unveiled his tem-
perament, in *Astrophel and Stella* he laid bare
his soul alike in its mortality and its immortality,
and in *The Defence of Poesie* he gave us the clear
stamp of his mind.

This is the human and particular interest of
this book, — that Sidney's mind is here. If to the
common imagination of the English race he now
seems a pictorial figure, a spirit moving in a re-
moter air, a legend of mythic beauty; if he in-
spires an adoring rather than an understanding
attitude, this is not of necessity the case. He may
be as familiarly known as any other English poet
or gentleman who lives by the record of the
past. If one reads only these few pages with
intelligence and alertness, Sidney soon takes on
solidity and definiteness of human character.
The Defence is sometimes spoken of as if it were
a declamation of vague feeling, a shadow and
echo of Platonic aspiration, a sounding rhapsody
only, or as if this quality characterized it. The
light and music of Plato are in it, and in its course
there does rise that wonderful English ground-
swell whose lofty melody is half in the thought,
half in the cadence, both wedded in harmony;
but though there is such an accompaniment and

occasional overflow of the finer element of all Intro-
language, as in Milton likewise, the Defence to duction
a mind grown familiar with its beauty is most
striking for the wealth and precision of its details,
the swiftness of its condensed logic, the readi-
ness of its citation of person, fact and thought,
and especially for its closeness to actual life. The
touch of knightly exercises at the beginning;
the range from the arentos of the South Ame-
rican Indians, which Sidney had heard of, to the
Hungarian feast-songs, that he had been pre-
sent at; the marks of Wales and Ireland, with
both of which he was personally familiar; and
in books—not to speak of foreign learning that
he had appropriated, of the Greek which he
enjoyed or the Latin which, as Languet in his
good advice foresaw, he more used—his know-
ledge sweeps from Percy's Song and Chaucer's
"antiquity" to the latest phase of what was then
the elegant modernity of Euphuism, and in every
case the stamp of vital experience, of personal
contact, is on these literary references. His edu-
cation was so good, so wisely directed, that it
became true experience; his experience in turn
became true education, the whole a seamless
garment of life. The shirt of Nessus was not
closer to the flesh than the examples, adduced
in the text, and all its feeding matter of fact and
authority are to the power of thought. It is this
last—power of thought—that most marks the

Intro- Defence; its onward march, rapid and assured,
duction is never checked, not even by those cadenced
sentences of wisdom, which are foregleams of
Bacon and sometimes make the page a ridged
sea of melody; "like as the waves make toward
the pebbled shore," they all obey the master-
flow of the intellect that streams on in its great
argument.

It is here that Sidney's Englishry stands clear
of his subject. Truly he did not emancipate him-
self from that veneration for authority that be-
longed to his nature and his culture alike; but
his mind did not abide in Greek or Latin, or in
Italy; he brought his treasures home, and they
were his servants. It is said that his matter is
Italian: no thought but what may be found in
a previous writer, and in fact all the thoughts of
the Continent on the topic gathered in one com-
prehensive creed. Minturno, Fracastorio, Scaliger,
—his granary is stuffed with their grain. The fact
is so. The identification of his sources only shows
the perfection of his preparation to write his
book. But this marshalling of the whole ration-
ally, lucidly, systematically, this exposition firm,
agile, exact, like fencing, is Sidney's; he brings
all to a practical end. The blend of romance and
practice is racial in the English; in Sidney it was
thorough, and gave his life that chivalric quality
which makes him an ideal figure. The blend of
criticism with practice in a similar way charac-

terizes the Defence. Just as its text is knitted of living experience, and is the spectacle of a live mind, so its end is conjoined with life itself, and is ethical. There was no need for him to range abroad to learn this lesson. It was in the blood from which he sprang, in his English genius that ever follows this master-light. Nor can I except from his Englishry the devoutness of his mind. Here at the core of the work, in the devoutness of the author's mind and the ethical end of his discourse, are the native forces that preserved for all time in an English classic what in Italian critics and philosophers has vanished from men's memories.

Intro-
duction

The true excellency of the Defence, which is out of the range of all its other excellencies as an index of culture and a mirror of personality, is that it contains the truth about poetry. Sidney boldly put poetry in the front of all merely human power, the friend and companion of man in the virtuous way, disclosing the ideal and inciting to its accomplishment, illuminating and warming the soul at once and urging it on in its career toward that perfectness in union with which it finds its true nature. In this doctrine there was not only the traditional speculative Platonic vision; there was, as he handled it, intense moral energy. Here Sidney found the harmony between his Puritan earnestness and Italian æstheticism which is most clear in his words

Intro- about the Scriptures. The Bible was the ompha-
duction los of Protestantism; when states shocked to-
gether, in that time, faith was the force that gave
momentum to their massed armaments; men
daily suffered and died throughout Europe for
their religion. Sidney's devoutness of mind was
not only a grace of his own soul; it was one with
his earthly loyalty to crown and land. To him
there was such sacredness in divine things that
he passed over the notion of the inspiration of
secular poetry as an expression and an idea of too
doubtful reverence to be canvassed. But when
he found in the Scriptures themselves the ways
of poetry used to reveal and to edify, and tale
and psalm and parable wearing the garment of
ideal imagination, his assurance was complete;
his argument was sealed with the seals of the
Spirit. This faith, first put forth by him with
such a fund of thought, such glow of words, such
elevation, from which the calm self-possession of
assured victory is never absent, has been the
food of English poets to this day; in their greater
works, in their brief lyrics, in their letters and fa-
miliar talk, they repeat the old words over; how-
ever they may discuss the lesser matters of topic,
technique and taste, as Sidney himself did, the
wellspring at the source of all is still that faith
that poetry has a permission from the Maker of
Heaven and Earth to approach nigh to divine
ways by creation within our own world of time

and sense, by an intimacy in men's bosoms to Intro-
draw them to the good, by the noble mastery duction
belonging to essential loveliness to awake affec-
tion, imitation, realization in their lives. Forgetful
of this faith, English poetry falls to lower levels
of a rhetorical expertness or intellectual wit; but,
when loyal, it scales all heights from the days
of Sidney's own companion, Edmund Spenser, to
those of Shelley, his last great disciple.

It was fortunate that a faith so exalted was put
forth by one to whose character it was so be-
coming that its expression is his natural and
easy speech. His own nobility seems to certify
its truth. This serious-minded youth who was
also the "rose of the fair state" was destined to
so sweet and attractive a memory, to such tran-
scendent ideality in the imagining affections of
future ages, that on his lips the doctrine of the
divine sanction of poetry and of its rank as the
most practical of all arts is a fitting utterance. He
is equal to so great a sentence without presump-
tion. It was fortunate also for us that Sidney left,
in addition to the imaginative work of still
younger years, this record of his graver mind
where we may approach his every-day life
which is otherwise known to us only by the lov-
ing tributes of his friends, a few tasks of state
worthily accomplished and one fine action. By
that action, the giving of the bottle of water to
the dying soldier, his mortal shape is now fig-

Intro-
duction

ured in all remembering minds; and, for readers, this book of *The Defence of Poesie* now makes most human and draws within the compass of our understanding that strong and beautiful soul, subduing all the graces of life to practical moral energy, in whom for our love and revering all England was modelled in a little clay.

G. E. W.

THE DEFENCE OF POESIE
&c.

TO THE READER

* *
* *



HE stormie Winter (deere Chyl-
dren of the Muses, which hath
so long held backe the glorious
Sun-shine of divine Poesie, is
heere by the sacred pen-breath-
ing words of divine Sir Phillip
Sidney, not onely chased from our fame-inviting
Clyme, but utterly for ever banisht eternitie:
then graciously regret the perpetuall spring
of ever-growing invention, and like kinde Babes,
either enabled by wit or power, help to support
me poore Midwife, whose daring adventure, hath
delivered from Oblivions wombe, this ever-to-
be-admired wits miracle. Those great ones, who
in themselves have interr'd this blessed innocent,
wil with Æsculapius condemne me as a detractor
from their Deities: those who Prophet-like have
but heard presage of his comming, wil (if they wil
doe wel) not onely defend, but praise mee, as the
first publique bewrayer of Poesies Messias. Those
who neither have seene, thereby to interre, nor
heard, by which they might be inflamed with
desire to see, let them (of duty) plead to be my
Champions, sith both theyr sight and hearing, by
mine incurring blame is seasoned. Excellent Poe-
sie, (so created by this Apologie,) be thou my

To the Defendresse; and if any wound mee, let thy
Reader beautie (my soules Adamant) recure mee: if anie
commend mine endeavored hardiment, to them
commend thy most divinest fury as a winged in-
couragement; so shalt thou have devoted to thee,
and to them obliged

Henry Olney.

FOURE SONNETS
WRITTEN BY HENRIE CONSTABLE
TO
SIR PHILLIP SIDNEYS SOULE

2

Give pardon (blessed Soule) to my bold cries
If they (importund) interrupt thy song,
Which nowe with joyfull notes thou sing'st, among
-The Angel-Quiristers of heav'nly skyes:
Give pardon eake (sweet Soule) to my slow cries,
That since I saw thee now it is so long,
And yet the teares that unto thee belong,
To thee as yet they did not sacrifice:
I did not know that thou wert dead before,
I did not feele the grieffe I did susteine,
"The greater stroke astonisheth the more,
"Astonishment takes from us sence of paine,
I stood amaz'd when others teares begun,
And now begin to weepe, when they have doone.

II

Sweet Soule which now with heav'nly songs doost tel
Thy deare Redeemers glory, and his prayse,
No mervaile though thy skilfull Muse, assayes
The songs of other soules there to excell:
For thou didst learne to sing divinely well,
Long time before thy fayre, and glittering rayes
Encreas'd the light of heav'n, for even thy layes
Most heavenly were, when thou on earth didst dwel:
When thou didst on the earth sing Poet-wise,
Angels in heav'n pray'd for thy company,
And now thou sing'st with Angels in the skies,
Shall not all Poets praise thy memory?
And to thy name shall not their works give fame
When as their works be sweetned by thy name?

III

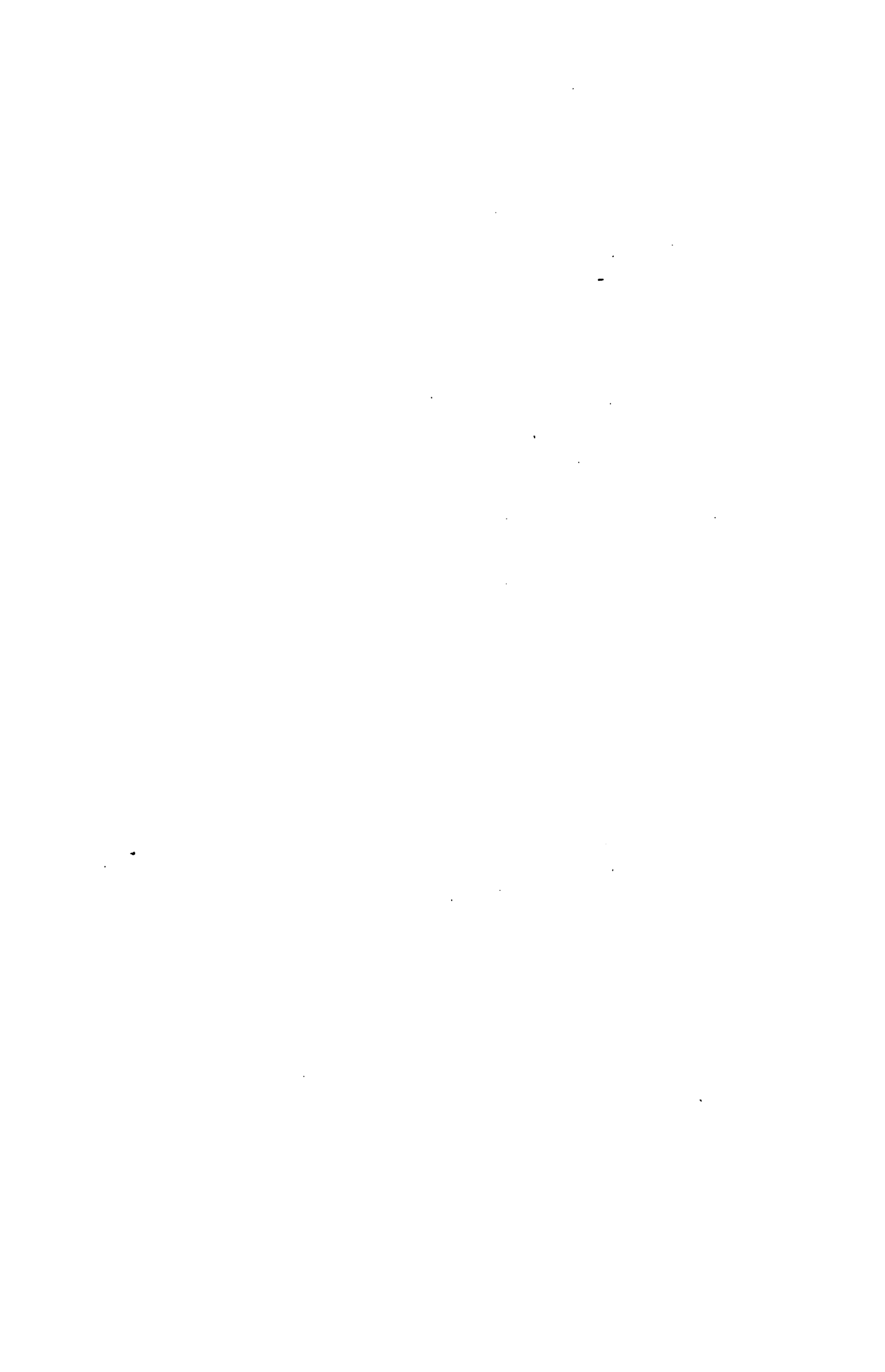
Even as when great mens heires cannot agree:
So ev'ry vertue now for part of thee doth sue,
Courage prooves by thy death thy hart to be his due,
Eloquence claimes thy tongue, and so doth courtesy,
Invention knowledge sues, Judgment sues memory.
Each saith thy head is his, and what end shall ensue
Of this strife know I not, but this I know for true,
That whosoever gaines the sute, the losse have wee,
Wee, (I meane all the world) the losse to all pertaineth,
Yea they which gaine doe loose, and onely thy soule
gaineth,
For loosing of one life, two lives are gained then:
Honor thy courage mov'd, courage thy death did give,
Death, courage, honor, makes thy soule to live,
Thy soule to live in heav'n, thy name in tongues of men.

IV

Great Alexander then did well declare
How great was his united Kingdomes might,
When ev'ry Captaine of his Army might
After his death with mighty Kings compare:
So now we see after thy death, how far
Thou dost in worth surpasse each other Knight,
When we admire him as no mortall wight,
In whom the least of all thy vertues are:
One did of Macedon the King become,
Another sat in the Egiptian throne,
But onely Alexanders selfe had all:
So curteous some, and some be liberall,
Some witty, wise, valiaunt, and learned some,
But King of all the vertues thou alone.

Henry Constable.

THE DEFENCE OF POESIE



THE DEFENCE OF POESIE

* *
*



WHEN the right vertuous E. W. and I, were at the Emperours Court together, wee gave ourselves to learne horsemanship of Jon Pietro Pugliano, one that with great commendation had the place of an Esquire in his stable: and hee according to the fertiines of the Italian wit, did not onely affoord us the demonstration of his practise, but sought to enrich our mindes with the contemplations therein, which he thought most precious. But with none I remember mine eares were at any time more loaden, then when (either angered with slow paiment, or mooved with our learnerlike admiration) hee exercised his speech in the praise of his facultie. He said souldiers were the noblest estate of mankind, and horsemen the noblest of souldiers. He said they were the maisters of warre, and ornaments of peace, speedie goers, and strong abiders, triumphers both in Camps and Courts: nay to so unbleeved a point he proceeded, as that no earthly thing bred such wonder to a Prince, as to be a good horseman. Skill of government was but a Pedanteria, in comparison, then would he adde certaine praises by telling what a peerlesse beast the horse was, the

The Defence of Poesie
onely serviceable Courtier without flattery, the
best of most bewtie, faithfulness, courage, and
such more, that if I had not bene a peece of a
Logician before I came to him, I thinke he would
have perswaded me to have wished myselfe a
horse. But thus much at least, with his no few
words he drave into me, that selfelove is bet-
ter then any guilding, to make that seem gor-
gious wherin ourselves be parties. Wherin if Pu-
lianos strong affection and weake arguments will
not satisfie you, I wil give you a nearer exam-
ple of myselfe, who I know not by what mis-
chance in these my not old yeares and idlest
times, having slipt into the title of a Poet, am
provoked to say somthing unto you in the de-
fence of that my unelected vocation, which if I
handle with more good will, then good reasons,
beare with me, since the scholler is to be par-
doned that followeth the steps of his maister.
And yet I must say, that as I have more just cause
to make a pittifull defence of poore Poetrie, which
from almost the highest estimation of learning,
is falne to be the laughing stocke of children,
so have I need to bring some more availeable
proofes, since the former is by no man bard of his
deserved credit, the silly later, hath had even the
names of Philosophers used to the defacing of it,
with great daunger of civill warre among the
Muses. And first truly to all them that professing
learning envey against Poetrie, may justly be

objected, that they go very neare to ungratefulnesse, to seeke to deface that which in the noblest nations and languages that are knowne, hath bene the first light-giver to ignorance, and first nurse whose milke litle and litle enabled them to feed afterwards of tougher knowledges. And will you play the Hedge-hogge, that being received into the den, drave out his host? Or rather the Vipers, that with their birth kill their parents? Let learned Greece in any of his manifold Sciences, be able to shew me one booke before Musæus, Homer, and Hesiod, all three nothing else but Poets. Nay let any Historie bee brought, that can say any writers were there before them, if they were not men of the same skill, as Orpheus, Linus, and some other are named, who having bene the first of that country that made pennes deliverers of their knowledge to the posteritie, may justly challenge to bee called their Fathers in learning. For not onely in time they had this prioritie, (although in itselfe antiquitie be venerable) but went before them, as causes to draw with their charming sweetness the wild untamed wits to an admiration of knowledge. So as Amphion, was said to moove stones with his Poetry, to build Thebes, and Orpheus to be listned to by beasts, indeed stonie and beastly people. So among the Romans, were Livius, Andronicus, and Ennius, so in the Italian language, the first that made it aspire to be a

The Defence of Poesie

The De- treasure-house of Science, were the Poets Dante,
fence of Bocace, and Petrarch. So in our English, wer Gower,
Poesie and Chawcer, after whom, encoraged and de-
lighted with their excellent foregoing, others have
followed to bewtify our mother toong, aswel in
the same kind as other arts. This did so notably
shew itself, that the Philosophers of Greece durst
not a long time apear to the world, but under the
mask of poets. So Thales, Empedocles, and Par-
menides, sang their naturall Philosophie in verses.
So did Pithagoras and Phocillides, their morall
Councels. So did Tirteus in warre matters, and
Solon in matters of pollicie, or rather they being
Poets, did exercise their delightfull vaine in those
points of highest knowledge, which before them
laie hidden to the world. For, that wise Solon was
directly a Poet, it is manifest, having written in
verse the notable Fable of the Atlantick Iland,
which was continued by Plato. And truly even
Plato whosoever well considereth, shall finde that
in the body of his worke though the inside and
strength were Philosophie, the skin as it were and
beautie, depended most of Poetrie. For all stands
upon Dialogues, wherein hee faines many honest
Burgesses of Athens speak of such matters, that
if they had bene set on the Racke, they would
never have confessed them: besides his Poeti-
call describing the circumstances of their meet-
ings, as the well ordering of a banquet, the de-
licacie of a walke, with enterlacing meere Tales,

as Gyges Ring and others, which, who knowes The De-
not to bee flowers of Poetrie, did never walke fence of
into Appolos Garden. And even Historiogra- Poesie
phers, although their lippes sound of things done,
and veritie be written in their foreheads, have
bene glad to borrow both fashion and perchance
weight of the Poets. So Herodotus entituled his
Historie, by the name of the nine Muses, and both
he and all the rest that followed him, either stale,
or usurped of Poetrie, their passionate describ-
ing of passions, the many particularities of bat-
tels which no man could affirme, or if that be
denied me, long Orations put in the mouthes of
great Kings and Captains, which it is certaine
they never pronounced. So that truly neither
Philosopher, nor Historiographer, could at the
first have entered into the gates of populer judge-
ments, if they had not taken a great passport of
Poetrie, which in all nations at this day where
learning flourisheth not, is plaine to be seene: in
all which, they have some feeling of Poetry. In
Turkey, besides their lawgiving Divines, they
have no other writers but Poets. In our neigh-
bour Countrey Ireland, where truly learning goes
verie bare, yet are their Poets held in a devout
reverence. Even among the most barbarous and
simple Indians, where no writing is, yet have
they their Poets who make and sing songs which
they call Arentos, both of their Auncestors deeds,
and praises of their Gods. A sufficient probabil-

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ity, that if ever learning come among them, it must be by having their hard dull wittes softened and sharpened with the sweete delights of Poetrie, for untill they finde a pleasure in the exercise of the minde, great promises of much knowledge, wil little persuade them that know not the frutes of knowledge. In Wales, the true remnant of the auncient Brittons, as there are good authorities to shew, the long time they had Poets which they called Bardes: so thorow all the conquests of Romans, Saxons, Danes, and Normans, some of whom, did seeke to ruine all memory of learning from among them, yet do their Poets even to this day last: so as it is not more notable in the soone beginning, then in long continuing. But since the Authors of most of our Sciences, were the Romanes, and before them the Greekes, let us a litle stand upon their authorities, but even so farre as to see what names they have given unto this now scorned skill. Among the Romanes a Poet was called Vates, which is as much as a diviner, foreseeer, or Prophet, as by his conjoyned words Vaticinium, and Vaticinari, is manifest, so heavenly a title did that excellent people bestowe uppon this hart-ravishing knowledge, and so farre were they carried into the admiration thereof, that they thought in the chanceable hitting uppon any of such verses, great foretokens of their following fortunes, were placed. Whereupon grew the word of Sortes

Vergilianæ, when by suddaine opening Virgils The De-
booke, they lighted uppon some verse of his, as fence of
it is reported by many, whereof the Histories of Poesie
the Emperours lives are full. As of Albinus the
Governour of our Iland, who in his childhood
met with this verse *Arma amens capio, nec sat
rationis in armis*: and in his age performed it,
although it were a verie vaine and godlesse su-
perstition, as also it was, to thinke spirits were
commaunded by such verses, whereupon this
word Charmes, derived of *Carmina* commeth:
so yet serveth it to shew the great reverence
those wittes were held in, and altogether not
without ground, since both by the Oracles of
Delphos and Sybillas prophesies, were wholly
delivered in verses, for that same exquisite ob-
serving of number and measure in the words,
and that high flying libertie of conceit proper
to the Poet, did seeme to have some divine force
in it. And may not I presume a little farther, to
shewe the reasonableness of this word *Vatis*
and say that the holy Davids Psalms are a di-
vine Poeme? If I do, I shal not do it without the
testimony of great learned men, both auncient
and moderne. But even the name of Psalmes
wil speak for me, which being interpreted, is no-
thing but Songs: then that it is fully written in
meeter as all learned Hebritians agree, although
the rules be not yet fully found. Lastly and prin-
cipally, his handling his prophecie, which is

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meerly Poeticall. For what else is the awaking his
musical Instruments, the often and free chaun-
ging of persons, his notable Prosopopeias, when
he maketh you as it were see God comming in
his majestie, his telling of the beasts joyfulnessse,
and hils leaping, but a heavenly poesie, wherin
almost he sheweth himselfe a passionate lover of
that unspeakable and everlasting bewtie, to be
seene by the eyes of the mind, onely cleered by
faith? But trully now having named him, I feare
I seeme to prophane that holy name, applying
it to Poetry, which is among us throwne downe
to so ridiculous an estimation.

But they that with quiet judgements wil looke
a litle deeper into it, shal find the end and work-
ing of it such, as being rightly applied, deserv-
eth not to be scourged out of the Church of
God. But now let us see how the Greekes have
named it, and how they deemed of it. The Greekes
named him ποιητήν, which name, hath as the
most excellent, gone through other languages, it
commeth of this word ποιεῖν which is to make:
wherin I know not whether by luck or wisdom,
we Englishmen have met with the Greekes in call-
ing him a Maker. Which name, how high and in-
comparable a title it is, I had rather were knowne
by marking the scope of other sciences, then by
any partial allegation.

There is no Art delivered unto mankind that
hath not the workes of nature for his principall

object, without which they could not consist, and The De-
on which they so depend, as they become Ac- fence of
tors and Plaiers, as it were of what nature will Poesie
have set forth. So doth the Astronomer looke
upon the starres, and by that he seeth set downe
what order nature hath taken therein. So doth
the Geometritian, and Arithmititian, in their di-
vers sorts of quantities. So doth the Musitians in
times tel you, which by nature agree, which not.
The natural Philosopher thereon hath his name,
and the morall Philosopher standeth uppon the
naturall vertues, vices, or passions of man: and
follow nature saith he therein, and thou shalt not
erre. The Lawier saith, what men have deter-
mined. The Historian what men have done. The
Gramarian, speaketh onely of the rules of speech,
and the Rhetoritian, and Logitian, considering
what in nature wil soonest proove, and perswade
thereon, give artificiall rules, which still are com-
passed within the circle of a question, according
to the proposed matter. The Phisitian wayeth
the nature of mans bodie, and the nature of things
helpfull, or hurtfull unto it. And the Metaphisicke
though it be in the second and abstract Notions,
and therefore be counted supernaturall, yet doth
hee indeed build upon the depth of nature. Only
the Poet, disdeining to be tied to any such sub-
jection, lifted up with the vigor of his own inven-
tion, doth grow in effect into another nature: in
making things either better then nature bringeth

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foorth, or quite a new, formes such as never were
in nature: as the Heroes, Demigods, Cyclops, Chy-
meras, Furies, and such like; so as he goeth hand
in hand with nature, not enclosed within the nar-
row warrant of her gifts, but freely raunging with-
in the Zodiack of his owne wit. Nature never set
foorth the earth in so rich Tapistry as diverse
Poets have done, neither with so pleasaunt rivers,
fruitfull trees, sweete smelling flowers, nor what-
soever els may make the too much loved earth
more lovely: her world is brasen, the Poets only
deliver a golden. But let those things alone and
goe to man, for whom as the other things are, so it
seemeth in him her uttermost comming is im-
ploied: and know whether she have brought foorth
so true a lover as Theagenes, so constant a friend
as Pylades, so valiant a man as Orlando, so right
a Prince as Xenophons Cyrus, so excellent a man
every way as Virgils Aeneas. Neither let this be
jestingly conceived, bicause the works of the one
be essencially, the other in imitation or fiction:
for everie understanding, knoweth the skill of
ech Artificer standeth in that Idea, or fore-con-
ceit of the worke, and not in the worke it selfe.
And that the Poet hath that Idea, is manifest,
by delivering them foorth in such excellencie as
he had imagined them: which delivering foorth,
also is not wholly imaginative, as we are wont
to say by them that build Castles in the aire: but
so farre substancially it worketh, not onely to

make a Cyrus, which had bene but a particular excellency as nature might have done, but to bestow a Cyrus upon the world to make many Cyrusses, if they will learne aright, why and how that maker made him. Neither let it be deemed too sawcy a comparison, to ballance the highest point of mans wit, with the efficacie of nature: but rather give right honor to the heavenly maker of that maker, who having made man to his owne likenes, set him beyond and over all the workes of that second nature, which in nothing he sheweth so much as in Poetry; when with the force of a divine breath, he bringeth things forth surpassing her doings: with no small arguments to the incredulous of that first accursed fall of Adam, since our erected wit maketh us know what perfection is, and yet our infected wil keepeth us from reaching unto it. But these arguments will by few be understood, and by fewer graunted: thus much I hope will be given me, that the Greeks with some probability of reason, gave him the name above all names of learning. Now let us goe to a more ordinarie opening of him, that the truth may be the more palpable: and so I hope though we get not so unmatched a praise as the Etimologie of his names will graunt, yet his verie description which no man will denie, shall not justly be barred from a principall commendation. Poesie therefore, is an Art of Imitation: for so Aristotle termeth it in the word

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The De- *μίμησις*, that is to say, a representing, counter-
 fence of feiting, or figuring forth to speake Metaphorically.
 Poesie A speaking Picture, with this end to teach and
 delight. Of this have bene three generall kindes,
 the chiefe both in antiquitie and excellencie, were
 they that did imitate the unconceivable excel-
 lencies of God. Such were David in his Psalmes,
 Salomon in his song of songs, in his Ecclesi-
 astes and Proverbes. Moses and Debora, in their
 Hymnes, and the wryter of Jobe: Which be-
 side other, the learned Emanuell Tremelius, and
 F. Junius, doo entitle the Poeticall part of the
 scripture: against these none will speake that
 hath the holie Ghost in due holie reverence. In
 this kinde, though in a full wrong divinitie, were
 Orpheus, Amphion, Homer in his himnes, and
 manie other both Greeke and Romanes. And this
 Poesie must be used by whosoever will follow
 S. Paules counsaile, in singing Psalmes when they
 are mery, and I knowe is used with the frute of
 comfort by some, when in sorrowfull panges of
 their death bringing sinnes, they finde the con-
 solation of the never leaving goodnes. The se-
 cond kinde, is of them that deale with matters
 Philosophicall, either morall as Tirteus, Phoci-
 lides, Cato; or naturall, as Lucretius, and Virgils
 Georgikes; or Astronomicall as Manilius, and
 Pontanus; or Historicall, as Lucan: which who
 mislike the fault, is in their judgment quite out
 of tast, and not in the sweet food of sweetly ut-

tered knowledge. But bicause this second sort is wrapped within the folde of the proposed subject, and takes not the free course of his own invention, whether they properly bee Poets or no, let Gramarians dispute; and goe to the third indeed right Poets, of whom chiefly this question ariseth: betwixt whom and these second, is such a kinde of difference, as betwixt the meaner sort of Painters, who counterfeyt onely such faces as are set before them, and the more excelent, who having no law but wit, bestow that in colours upon you, which is fittest for the eye to see, as the constant, though lamenting looke of Lucretia, when shee punished in herselfe anothers faulte: wherein hee painteth not Lucretia whom he never saw, but painteth the outward bewty of such a vertue. For these third be they which most properly do imitate to teach and delight: and to imitate, borrow nothing of what is, hath bin, or shall be, but range onely reined with learned discretion, into the divine consideration of what may be and should be. These be they that as the first and most noble sort, may justly be termed Vates: so these are waited on in the excellentest languages and best understandings, with the fore described name of Poets. For these indeed do meerly make to imitate, and imitate both to delight and teach, and delight to move men to take that goodnesse in hand, which without delight they would flie as from a stranger;

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The Defence of Poesie and teach to make them know that goodnesse wherunto they are moved; which being the noblest scope to which ever any learning was directed, yet want there not idle tongues to barke at them.

These be subdivided into sundry more speciall denominations. The most notable be the Heroick, Lyrick, Tragick, Comick, Satyrick, Iambick, Elegiack, Pastorall, and certaine others: some of these being tearmed according to the matter they deale with, some by the sort of verse they liked best to write in, for indeed the greatest part of Poets, have apparelled their poetick inventions, in that numbrous kind of writing which is called vers. Indeed but apparelled verse: being but an ornament and no cause to Poetrie, since there have bene many most excellent Poets that never versefied, and now swarme many versefiers that need never answeere to the name of Poets. For Xenophon who did imitate so excellently as to give us effigiem justı imperii, the pourtraiture of a just Empyre under the name of Cyrus, as Cicero saith of him, made therein an absolute heroicall Poeme. So did Heliodorus, in his sugred invention of that picture of love in Theagenes and Chariclea, and yet both these wrote in prose, which I speake to shew, that it is not ryming and versing that maketh a Poet, (no more then a long gown maketh an Advocate, who though he pleaded in Armour, should be an Advocat

and no souldier) but it is that faining notable The De-
images of vertues, vices, or what els, with that fence of
delightfull teaching, which must be the right de- Poesie
scribing note to know a Poet by. Although in-
deed the Senate of Poets hath chosen verse as
their fittest raiment: meaning as in matter, they
passed all in all, so in maner, to go beyond them:
not speaking table talke fashion, or like men in
a dreame, words as they chanceably fall from
the mouth, but peasing each sillable of eache
word by just proportion, according to the dig-
nitie of the subject. Now therefore it shal not be
amisse, first to way this latter sort of poetrie by
his workes, and then by his parts, and if in nei-
ther of these Anatomies hee be condemnable,
I hope we shall obtaine a more favourable sen-
tence. This purifying of wit, this enriching of
memorie, enabling of judgement, and enlarging
of conceit, which commonly we cal learning, un-
der what name soever it come forth, or to what
immediate end soever it be directed, the finall
end is, to lead and draw us to as high a perfec-
tion, as our degenerate soules made worse by
their clay-lodgings, can be capable of. This ac-
cording to the inclination of man, bred many
formed impressions. For some that thought this
felicity principally to be gotten by knowledge,
and no knowledge to be so high or heavenly,
as acquaintance with the stars; gave themselves
to Astronomie: others perswading themselves

The De- to be Demygods, if they knew the causes of
 fence of things, became naturall and supernaturall Phi-
 Poesie losophers. Some an admirable delight drew to
 Musicke; and some the certaintie of demonstra-
 tion to the Mathematicks: but all one and other
 having this scope to know, and by knowledge
 to lift up the minde from the dungeon of the
 bodie, to the enjoying his owne divine essence.
 But when by the ballance of experience it was
 found, that the Astronomer looking to the stars
 might fall in a ditch, that the inquiring Philoso-
 pher might be blind in him self, and the Mathe-
 matician might draw forth a straight line with
 a crooked hart. Then lo did prooffe, the overruler
 of opinions make manifest, that all these are but
 serving sciences; which as they have a private
 end in themselves, so yet are they all directed to
 the highest end of the mistresse knowledge by
 the Greeks [called] ἀρχιτεκτονική, which stands
 as I thinke, in the knowledge of a mans selfe, in
 the Ethike and Politique consideration, with the
 end of well doing, and not of well knowing
 onely. Even as the Sadlers next ende is to make
 a good Saddle, but his further ende, to serve a
 nobler facultie, which is horsmanship, so the horse-
 mans to souldiery: and the souldier not only to
 have the skill, but to performe the practise of
 a souldier. So that the ending end of all earthly
 learning, being verteous action, those skills that
 most serve to bring forth that, have a most just

title to be Princes over al the rest: wherein if we can shew, the Poet is worthy to have it before any other competitors: among whom principally to challenge it, step forth the moral Philosophers, whom me thinks I see comming towards me, with a sullain gravitie, as though they could not abide vice by day-light, rudely cloathed, for to witnesse outwardly their contempt of outward things, with bookes in their hands against glorie, whereto they set their names: sophisticatedly speaking against subtiltie, and angry with any man in whom they see the foule fault of anger. These men casting larges as they go of definitions, divisions, and distinctions, with a scornful interrogative, do soberly aske, whether it be possible to find any path so ready to lead a man to vertue, as that which teacheth what vertue is, and teacheth it not only by delivering forth his very being, his causes and effects, but also by making knowne his enemie vice, which must be destroyed, and his combersome servant passion, which must be mastered: by shewing the generalities that contains it, and the specialities that are derived from it. Lastly by plaine setting downe, how it extends itselfe out of the limits of a mans owne little world, to the government of families, and mainteining of publike societies. The Historian, scarsely gives leisure to the Moralist to say so much, but that he loaden with old mouse-eaten Records, authorising himselfe for the most part upon other

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Histories, whose greatest authorities are built
 uppon the notable foundation Heresay, having
 much ado to accord differing writers, and to pick
 truth out of partiality: better acquainted with a
 thousand yeres ago, then with the present age,
 and yet better knowing how this world goes,
 then how his owne wit runnes, curious for An-
 tiquities, and inquisitive of Novelties, a wonder
 to yoong folkes, and a Tyrant in table talke;
 denieth in a great chafe, that any man for teach-
 ing of vertue, and vertues actions, is comparable
 to him. I am *Testis temporum, lux veritatis,*
vita memoriæ, magistra vitæ, nuncia vetusta-
tis. The Philosopher saith he, teacheth a dispu-
 tative vertue, but I do an active. His vertue is
 excellent in the dangerlesse Academy of Plato:
 but mine sheweth forth her honourable face in
 the battailes of Marathon, Pharsalia, Poictiers,
 and Agincourt. Hee teacheth vertue by certaine
 abstract considerations: but I onely bid you fol-
 low the footing of them that have gone before
 you. Olde aged experience goeth beyond the
 fine witted Philosopher: but I give the experi-
 ence of many ages. Lastly, if he make the song
 Booke, I put the learners hand to the Lute, and
 if he be the guide, I am the light. Then would
 he alleage you innumerable examples, confirm-
 ing storie by stories, how much the wisest Sena-
 tors and Princes, have bene directed by the cre-
 dit of Historie, as Brutus, Alphonsus of Aragon,

(and who not if need be). At length, the long The De-
line of their disputation makes a point in this, fence of
that the one giveth the precept, and the other Poesie
the example. Now whom shall we find, since
the question standeth for the highest forme in
the schoole of learning to be moderator? Truly ✓
as mee seemeth, the Poet, and if not a modera-
tor, even the man that ought to carry the title
from them both: and much more from all other
serving sciences. Therefore compare we the Poet
with the Historian, and with the morall Philoso-
pher: and if hee goe beyond them both, no other
humaine skill can match him. For as for the di-
vine, with all reverence it is ever to be excepted,
not onely for having his scope as far beyond
any of these, as Eternitie exceedeth a moment:
but even for passing ech of these in themselves.
And for the Lawier, though Jus be the daugh-
ter of Justice, the chiefe of vertues, yet because
he seeks to make men good, rather formidine
pænæ, then virtutis amore: or to say righter,
doth not endeavor to make men good, but that
their evill hurt not others: having no care so he
be a good citizen, how bad a man he be. Ther-
fore as our wickednes maketh him necessarie,
and necessitie maketh him honorable, so is he
not in the deepest truth to stand in ranck with
these, who al endeavour to take naughtinesse
away, and plant goodnesse even in the secret-
est cabinet of our soules: and these foure are all

The Defence of Poesie that any way deale in the consideration of mens manners, which being the supreme knowledge, they that best breed it, deserve the best commendation. The Philosopher therefore, and the Historian, are they which would win the goale, the one by precept, the other by example: but both, not having both, doo both halt. For the Philosopher setting downe with thornie arguments, the bare rule, is so hard of utterance, and so mistie to be conceived, that one that hath no other guide but him, shall wade in him till he be old, before he shall finde sufficient cause to be honest. For his knowledge standeth so upon the abstract and generall, that happie is that man who may understand him, and more happie, that can apply what he doth understand. On the other side, the Historian wanting the precept, is so tied, not to what should be, but to what is, to the particular truth of things, and not to the general reason of things, that his example draweth no necessarie consequence, and therefore a lesse fruitfull doctrine. Now doth the peerlesse Poet performe both, for whatsoever the Philosopher saith should be done, he gives a perfect picture of it by some one, by whom he presupposeth it was done, so as he coupleth the generall notion with the particuler example. A perfect picture I say, for hee yeeldeth to the powers of the minde an image of that whereof the Philosopher bestoweth but a word-

ish description, which doth neither strike, pearce, The De-
nor possesse, the sight of the soule so much, as fence of
that other doth. For as in outward things to a Poesie
man that had never seene an Elephant, or a
Rinoceros, who should tell him most exquisitely
all their shape, cullour, bignesse, and particuler
marks, or of a gorgious pallace an Architecture,
who declaring the full bewties, might well make
the hearer able to repeat as it were by roat all
he had heard, yet should never satisfie his in-
ward conceit, with being witsse to it selfe of
a true lively knowledge: but the same man, as
soon as he might see those beasts wel painted,
or that house wel in modell, shuld straightwaies
grow without need of any description, to a ju-
dicial comprehending of them, so no doubt the
Philosopher with his learned definitions, be it
of vertues or vices, matters of publike policy
or privat government, replenisheth the memorie
with many infallible grounds of wisdom, which
notwithstanding lie darke before the imagina-
tive and judging power, if they be not illumina-
ted or figured forth by the speaking picture
of Poesie. Tully taketh much paines, and many
times not without Poeticall helpes to make us
know the force, love of our country hath in us.
Let us but heare old Anchices, speaking in the
middest of Troies flames, or see Ulisses in the
fulnesse of all Calipsoes delightes, bewaile his
absence from barraine and beggerly Ithecae.

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Anger the Stoickes said, was a short madnesse: let but Sophocles bring you Ajax on a stage, killing or whipping sheepe and oxen, thinking them the Army of Greekes, with their Chieftaines Agamemnon, and Menelaus: and tell me if you have not a more familiar insight into Anger, then finding in the schoolemen his Genus and Difference. See whether wisdom and temperance in Ulisses and Diomedes, valure in Achilles, friendship in Nisus and Eurialus, even to an ignorant man carry not an apparant shining: and contrarily, the remorse of conscience in Oedipus; the soone repenting pride in Agamemnon; the selfe devouring crueltie in his father Atreus; the violence of ambition in the two Theban brothers; the sower sweetnesse of revenge in Medea; and to fall lower, the Terentian Gnato, and our Chawcers Pander so exprest, that we now use their names, to signifie their Trades: And finally, all vertues, vices, and passions, so in their owne naturall states, laide to the view, that we seeme not to heare of them, but clearly to see through them. But even in the most excellent determination of goodnesse, what Philosophers counsaile can so readely direct a Prince, as the feined Cirus in Xenophon, or a vertuous man in all fortunes: as Aeneas in Virgill or a whole Common-wealth, as the Way of Sir Thomas Moores Eutopia. I say the Way, because where Sir Thomas Moore erred, it was the fault of the

man and not of the Poet: for that Way of pattern- The De-
ing a Common-wealth, was most absolute though fence of
hee perchaunce hath not so absolutely per- Poesie
formed it. For the question is, whether the fained
Image of Poetrie, or the reguler instruction of
Philosophie, hath the more force in teaching?
Wherein if the Philosophers have more rightly
shewed themselves Philosophers, then the Poets
have attained to the high toppe of their profes-
sion (as in truth *Mediocribus esse poetis non
Dii, non homines, non concessere columnæ*), it is
(I say againe) not the fault of the Art, but that by
fewe men that Art can be accomplished. Cer-
tainly even our Saviour Christ could as well have
given the morall commonplaces of uncharitable-
nesse and humblenesse, as the divine narration
of Dives and Lazarus, or of disobedience and
mercy, as that heavenly discourse of the lost
childe and the gracious Father, but that his
through searching wisdom, knew the estate of
Dives burning in hell, and of Lazarus in Abra-
hams bosome, would more constantly as it were,
inhabit both the memorie and judgement. Truly
for myselfe (mee seemes) I see before mine
eyes, the lost childs disdainful prodigalitie, turned
to envy a Swines dinner: which by the learned
Divines are thought not Historical acts, but in-
structing Parables. For conclusion, I say the Phi-
losopher teacheth, but he teacheth obscurely, so
as the learned onely can understand him, that is

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to say, he teacheth them that are already taught. But the Poet is the food for the tenderest stomachs, the Poet is indeed, the right popular Philosopher. Whereof Esops Tales give good proofe, whose prettie Allegories stealing under the formall Tales of beastes, makes many more beastly then beasts: begin to hear the sound of vertue from those dumbe speakers. But now may it be alleadged, that if this imagining of matters be so fit for the imagination, then must the Historian needs surpasse, who brings you images of true matters, such as indeed were done, and not such as fantastically or falsly may be suggested to have bin done. Truly Aristotle himselfe in his discourse of Poesie, plainly determineth this question, saying, that Poetrie is φιλοσοφωτε[ο]ν and σπουδαιωτε[ο]ν that is to say, it is more Philosophicall and more studiously serious then History. His reason is, because Poesie dealeth with καθόλου, that is to say, with the universall consideration, and the Historie with καθ' ἕκαστον, the particular. Now saith he, the universall wayes what is fit to be said or done, either in likelihood or necessitie, which the Poesie considereth in his imposed names: and the particular onely marketh whether Alcibiades did or suffered this or that. Thus farre Aristotle. Which reason of his, as all his is most full of reason. For indeed if the question were, whether it were better to have a particular act truly or falsly set downe, there is no doubt

which is to be chosen, no more then whether The De-
 you had rather have Vespacians Picture right fence of
 as he was, or at the Painters pleasure nothing re- Poesie
 sembling. But if the question be for your owne
 use and learning, whether it be better to have it
 set downe as it should be, or as it was; then cer-
 tainly is more doctrinable, the fained Cyrus in
 Xenophon, then the true Cyrus in Justin: and the
 fained Æneas in Virgill, then the right Æneas in
 Dares Phrighius: as to a Ladie that desired to fash-
 ion her countenance to the best grace: a Painter
 shuld more benefite her to pourtrait a most sweete
 face, writing Canidia uppon it, then to paint
 Canidia as shee was, who Horace sweareth was
 full ill favoured. If the Poet do his part aright, he
 wil shew you in Tantalus, Atreus, and such like,
 nothing that is not to be shunned; in Cyrus,
 Æneas, Ulisses, each thing to be followed: where
 the Historian bound to tell things as things were,
 cannot be liberall, without hee will be Poeticall
 of a perfect patterne, but as in Alexander or
 Scipio himselfe, shew doings, some to be liked,
 some to be misliked; and then how wil you
 discern what to follow, but by your own dis-
 cretion, which you had without reading Q. Cur-
 tius. And whereas a man may say, though in
 universall consideration of doctrine, the Poet pre-
 vaileth, yet that the Historie in his saying such
 a thing was done, doth warrant a man more in
 that he shall follow. The answer is manifest,

The Defence of Poesie that if he stand upon that was, as if he should argue, because it rained yesterday, therefore it should raine to day, then indeede hath it some advantage to a grosse conceit. But if hee knowe an example onely enformes a conjectured likelihood, and so goe by reason, the Poet doth so farre exceed him, as hee is to frame his example to that which is most reasonable, be it in warlike, politike, or private matters, where the Historian in his bare, was, hath many times that which we call fortune, to overrule the best wisdom. Manie times he must tell events, whereof he can yeeld no cause, or if he do, it must be poetically. For that a fained example hath as much force to teach, as a true example (for as for to moove, it is cleare, since the fained may be tuned to the highest key of passion) let us take one example wherein an Historian and a Poet did concurre. Herodotus and Justin doth both testifie, that Zopirus, King Darius faithful servant, seeing his maister long resisted by the rebellious Babilonians, fained himselfe in extreame disgrace of his King, for verifying of which, he caused his owne nose and eares to be cut off, and so flying to the Babylonians was received, and for his knowne valure so farre creadited, that hee did finde meanes to deliver them over to Darius. Much like matter doth Livy record of Tarquinius, and his sonne. Xenophon excellently faineth such another Stratageme, per-

formed by Abradates in Cyrus behalfe. Now The De-
would I faine knowe, if occasion be presented fence of
unto you, to serve your Prince by such an hon- Poesie
est dissimulation, why you do not as well learne
it of Xenophons fiction, as of the others veritie:
and truly so much the better, as you shall save
your nose by the bargaine. For Abradates did
not counterfeyt so farre. So then the best of the
Historian is subject to the Poet, for whatsoever
action or faction, whatsoever counsaile, pollicie,
or warre stratageme, the Historian is bounde to
recite, that may the Poet if hee list with his imi-
tation make his owne; bewtifying it both for
further teaching, and more delighting as it please
him: having all from Dante his heven to his hell,
under the authority of his pen. Which if I be
asked what Poets have don so? as I might wel
name some, so yet say I, and say again, I speake
of the Art and not of the Artificer. Now to that
which commonly is attributed to the praise of
Historie, in respect of the notable learning, is
got by marking the successe, as though therein
a man shuld see vertue exalted, and vice pun-
ished: truly that commendation is peculier to
Poetrie, and farre off from Historie; for indeed
Poetrie ever sets vertue so out in her best cul-
lours, making fortune her well-wayting hand-
mayd, that one must needs be enamoured of
her. Well may you see Ulisses in a storme and
in other hard plights, but they are but exercises

The Defence of Poesie of patience and magnanimitie, to make them shine the more in the neare following prosperitie. And of the contrary part, if evill men come to the stage, they ever goe out (as the Tragedie writer answered to one that misliked the shew of such persons) so maniced as they litle animate folkes to follow them. But the Historie being captived to the trueth of a foolish world, is many times a terror from well-doing, and an encouragement to unbrideled wickednes. For see we not valiant Milciades rot in his fetters? The just Phocion and the accomplished Socrates, put to death like Traytors? The cruell Severus, live prosperously? The excellent Severus miserably murdered? Sylla and Marius dying in their beds? Pompey and Cicero slain then when they wold have thought exile a happinesse? See we not vertuous Cato driven to kill himselfe, and Rebell Cæsar so advanced, that his name yet after sixteen hundred yeares lasteth in the highest honor? And marke but even Cæsars owne words of the forenamed Sylla, (who in that onely, did honestly to put downe his dishonest Tyrannie) Litteras nesciuit: as if want of learning caused him to doo well. He ment it not by Poetrie, which not content with earthly plagues, deviseth new punishments in hell for Tyrants: nor yet by Philosophy, which teacheth Occidendos esse, but no doubt by skill in History, for that indeed can afford you Cipselus, Periander, Phalaris, Dionisius,

and I know not how many more of the same The De-
 kennell, that speed well inough in their abhomi- fence of
 nable injustice of usurpation. I conclude therefore, Poesie
 that he excelleth historie, not onely in furnishing
 the minde with knowledge, but in setting it for-
 ward to that which deserves to be called and ac-
 counted good: which setting forward and moving
 to well doing, indeed setteth the Lawrell Crowne
 upon the Poets as victorious, not onely of the
 Historian, but over the Philosopher, howsoever
 in teaching it may be questionable. For sup-
 pose it be granted, that which I suppose with
 great reason may be denied, that the Philosopher
 in respect of his methodical proceeding, teach
 more perfectly then the Poet, yet do I thinke,
 that no man is so much φιλοφιλοσοφος, as to com-
 pare the Philosopher in mooving with the Poet.
 And that mooving is of a higher degree then
 teaching, it may by this appeare, that it is well
 nigh both the cause and effect of teaching. For
 who will be taught, if hee be not mooved with
 desire to be taught? And what so much good
 doth that teaching bring foorth, (I speake still of
 morall doctrine) as that it mooveth one to do that
 which it doth teach. For as Aristotle saith, it is
 not γνώσις, but πραξις must be the frute: and how
 πραξις can be without being mooved to practise,
 it is no hard matter to consider. The Philosopher
 sheweth you the way, hee enformeth you of the
 particularities, as well of the tediousnes of the

The Defence of Poesie way, as of the pleasaunt lodging you shall have when your journey is ended, as of the many by turnings that may divert you from your way. But this is to no man but to him that will reade him, and reade him with attentive studious painfulnessse, which constant desire, whosoever hath in him, hath alreadie past halfe the hardnesse of the way: and therefore is beholding to the Philosopher, but for the other halfe. Nay truly learned men have learnedly thought, that where once reason hath so much over-mastered passion, as that the minde hath a free desire to doo well, the inward light each minde hath in itselfe, is as good as a Philosophers booke, since in Nature we know it is well, to doo well, and what is well, and what is evill, although not in the wordes of Art which Philosophers bestow uppon us: for out of naturall conceit the Philosophers drew it; but to be moved to doo that which wee know, or to be mooved with desire to know. Hoc opus, hic labor est. Now therein of all Sciences I speake still of humane (and according to the humane conceit) is our Poet the Monarch. For hee doth not onely shew the way, but giveth so sweete a prospect into the way, as will entice anie man to enter into it: Nay he doth as if your journey should lye through a faire vineyard, at the verie first, give you a cluster of grapes, that full of that taste, you may long to passe further. Hee be- ginneth not with obscure definitions, which must

blurre the margent with interpretations, and The De-
loade the memorie with doubtfulnessse: but hee fence of
commeth to you with words set in delightfull Poesie
proportion, either accompanied with, or pre-
pared for the well enchanting skill of Musicke,
and with a tale forsooth he commeth unto you,
with a tale, which holdeth children from play,
and olde men from the Chimney corner; and
pretending no more, doth intend the winning
of the minde from wickednes to vertue; even as
the child is often brought to take most whole-
some things by hiding them in such other as
have a pleasaunt taste: which if one should begin
to tell them the nature of the Alloes or Rha-
barbarum they should receive, wold sooner take
their phisick at their eares then at their mouth,
so is it in men (most of which, are childish in
the best things, til they be cradled in their
graves) glad they will be to heare the tales of
Hercules, Achilles, Cyrus, Æneas, and hearing
them, must needes heare the right description
of wisdom, value, and justice; which if they had
bene barely (that is to say Philosophically) set
out, they would sweare they be brought to
schoole againe; that imitation whereof Poetrie is,
hath the most conveniencie to nature of al other:
insomuch that as Aristotle saith, those things
which in themselves are horrible, as cruel bat-
tailes, unnatural monsters, are made in poeticall
imitation, delightfull. Truly I have knowne men,

The Defence of Poesie that even with reading *Amadis de Gaule*, which God knoweth, wanteth much of a perfect Poesie, have found their hearts moved to the exercise of courtesie, liberalitie, and especially courage. Who readeth *Aeneas* carrying old *Anchises* on his backe, that wisheth not it were his fortune to performe so excellent an Act? Whom doth not those words of *Turnus* moove (the tale of *Turnus* having planted his image in the imagination) *fugientem hæc terra videbit? Usque adeone mori miserum est?* Wher the Philosophers as they think scorne to delight, so must they be content little to moove; saving wrangling whether *Virtus* be the chiefe or the onely good; whether the contemplative or the active life do excell; which *Plato* and *Boetius* well knew: and therefore made mistresse *Philosophie* verie often borrow the masking raiment of Poesie. For even those hard hearted evill men who thinke vertue a schoole name, and know no other good but *indulgere genio*, and therefore despise the austere admonitions of the Philosopher, and feele not the inward reason they stand upon, yet will be content to be delighted, which is all the good fellow Poet seemes to promise; and so steale to see the form of goodnes, (which seene, they cannot but love) ere themselves be aware, as if they tooke a medicine of *Cheries*. Infinit proofes of the straunge effects of this Poeticall invention, might be alleaged: onely two shall serve, which

are so often remembred, as I thinke all men know them. The one of Menenius Agrippa, who when the whole people of Rome had resolutely divided themselves from the Senate, with apparant shew of utter ruine, though he were for that time an excellent Orator, came not among them upon trust either of figurative speeches, or cunning insinuations, and much lesse with farre fet Maximes of Philosophie, which especially if they were Platonike, they must have learned Geometrie before they could well have conceived: but forsooth, he behaveth himselfe like a homely and familiar Poet. He telleth them a tale, that there was a time, when all the parts of the bodie made a mutinous conspiracie against the belly, which they thought devoured the frutes of each others labour: they concluded they would let so unprofitable a spender starve. In the end, to be short, for the tale is notorious, and as notorious that it was a tale, with punishing the belly they plagued themselves; this applied by him, wrought such effect in the people, as I never red, that onely words brought foorth: but then so suddaine and so good an alteration, for upon reasonable conditions, a perfect reconcilment ensued. The other is of Nathan the Prophet, who when the holie David, had so far forsaken God, as to confirme Adulterie with murther, when he was to do the tendrest office of a friend, in laying his owne shame before his eyes; sent by God

The De-
fence of
Poesie

The De- to call againe so chosen a servant, how doth he
fence of it? but by telling of a man whose beloved lambe
Poesie was ungratefully taken from his bosome. The Ap-
plication most divinely true, but the discourse it-
selfe fained; which made David (I speake of the
second and instrumentall cause) as in a glasse
see his owne filthinesse, as that heavenly Psalm
of mercie well testifieth. By these therefore ex-
amples and reasons, I thinke it may be manifest,
that the Poet with that same hand of delight,
doth draw the mind more effectually then any
other Art doth. And so a conclusion not unfitly
ensue, that as vertue is the most excellent rest-
ing place for al worldly learning to make his end
of, so Poetry being the most familiar to teach it,
and most Princely to move towards it, in the most
excellent worke, is the most excellent worke-
man. But I am content not onely to decipher him
by his workes (although workes in commenda-
tion and dispraise, must ever hold a high autho-
ritie) but more narrowly will examine his parts,
so that (as in a man) though altogither may carrie
a presence full of majestie and bewtie, perchance
in some one defectuous peece we may find blem-
ish: Now in his parts, kindes, or species, as you
list to tearme them, it is to be noted, that some
Poesies have coupled together two or three kindes,
as the Tragicall and Comicall, whereupon is risen
the Tragicomicall, some in the maner have min-
gled prose and verse, as Sanazara and Boetius;

some have mingled matters Heroicall and Pasto- The De-
rall, but that commeth all to one in this question, fence of
for if severed they be good, the conjunction can- Poesie
not be hurtfull: therefore perchance forgetting
some, and leaving some as needlesse to be re-
membred, it shall not bee amisse, in a word to
cite the speciall kindes, to see what faults may
be found in the right use of them. Is it then the
Pastorall Poeme which is misliked? (For per-
chance where the hedge is lowest they will
soonest leape over) is the poore pipe disdained,
which somtimes out of Mœlibeus mouth, can
shewe the miserie of people, under hard Lords
and ravening souldiers? And again by Titerus,
what blessednesse is derived, to them that lie low-
est, from the goodnesse of them that sit highest?
Sometimes under the prettie tales of Woolves and
sheepe, can enclude the whole considerations of
wrong doing and patience; sometimes shew that
contentions for trifles, can get but a trifling victory
wher perchance a man may see, that even Alex-
ander and Darius, when they strave who should
be Cocke of this worlde's dunghill, the benefit
they got, was, that the afterlivers may say, Hæc
memini et victum frustra contendere Thirsim. Ex
illo Coridon, Coridon est tempore nobis. Or is it
the lamenting Elegiack, which in a kinde heart
would moove rather pittie then blame, who be-
waileth with the great Philosopher Heraclitus, the
weakenesse of mankinde, and the wretchednesse

The De- of the world: who surely is to bee praised either
fence of for compassionate accompanying just causes of
Poesie lamentations, or for rightlie painting out how
weake be the passions of wofulnesse? Is it the
bitter but wholesome Iambick, who rubbes the
galled minde, in making shame the Trumpet of
villanie, with bolde and open crying out against
naughtinesse? Or the Satirick, who *Omne vafer
vitium ridenti tangit amico*, who sportingly, never
leaveth, till he make a man laugh at follie; and
at length ashamed, to laugh at himself; which he
cannot avoyde, without avoyding the follie? who
while *Circum præcordia ludit*, giveth us to feele
how many headaches a passionate life bringeth
us to? How when all is done, *Est Ulubris animus
si nos non deficit æquus*. No perchance it is the
Comick, whom naughtie Play-makers and stage-
keepers, have justly made odious. To the argu-
ments of abuse, I will after answer, onely thus
much now is to be said, that the Comedy is an
imitation of the common errors of our life, which
he representeth in the most ridiculous and scorn-
full sort that may be: so as it is impossible that
any beholder can be content to be such a one.
Now as in Geometrie, the oblique must be
knowne as well as the right, and in Arithmetick,
the odde as well as the even, so in the actions of
our life, who seeth not the filthinesse of evill,
wanteth a great foile to perceive the bewtie of
vertue. This doth the Comœdie handle so in our

private and domesticall matters, as with hearing The De-
it, wee get as it were an experience what is to fence of
be looked for of a niggardly Demea, of a craftie Poesie
Davus, of a flattering Gnato, of a vain-glorious
Thraso: and not onely to know what effects are to
be expected, but to know who be such, by the
signifying badge given them by the Comœ-
dient. And litle reason hath any man to say, that
men learne the evill by seeing it so set out, since
as I said before, there is no man living, but by the
force truth hath in nature, no sooner seeth these
men play their parts, but wisheth them in Pistri-
num, although perchance the sack of his owne
faults lie so behinde his backe, that he seeth not
himselve to dance the same measure: wherto
yet nothing can more open his eies, then to see
his owne actions contemptibly set forth. So that
the right use of Comœdie, will I thinke, by no-
bodie be blamed; and much lesse of the high
and excellent Tragedie, that openeth the great-
est woundes, and sheweth forth the Ulcers that
are covered with Tissue, that maketh Kings feare
to be Tyrants, and Tyrants manifest their tyran-
nicall humours, that with sturring the affects of
Admiration and Comiseration, teacheth the un-
certaintie of this world, and uppon how weak
foundations guilden roofes are builded: that
maketh us know, *Qui scœptra scœvus duro impe-
rio regit, Timet timentes, metus in authorem re-
dit.* But how much it can move, Plutarch yeeldeth

The Defence of Poesie way, as of the pleasaunt lodging you shall have when your journey is ended, as of the many by turnings that may divert you from your way. But this is to no man but to him that will reade him, and reade him with attentive studious painfullnesse, which constant desire, whosoever hath in him, hath alreadie past halfe the hardnesse of the way: and therefore is beholding to the Philosopher, but for the other halfe. Nay truly learned men have learnedly thought, that where once reason hath so much over-mastered passion, as that the minde hath a free desire to doo well, the inward light each minde hath in itselfe, is as good as a Philosophers booke, since in Nature we know it is well, to doo well, and what is well, and what is evill, although not in the wordes of Art which Philosophers bestow uppon us: for out of naturall conceit the Philosophers drew it; but to be moved to doo that which wee know, or to be mooved with desire to know. Hoc opus, hic labor est. Now therein of all Sciences I speake still of humane (and according to the humane conceit) is our Poet the Monarch. For hee doth not onely shew the way, but giveth so sweete a prospect into the way, as will entice anie man to enter into it: Nay he doth as if your journey should lye through a faire vineyard, at the verie first, give you a cluster of grapes, that full of that taste, you may long to passe further. Hee beginneth not with obscure definitions, which must

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are so often remembred, as I thinke all men know them. The one of Menenius Agrippa, who when the whole people of Rome had resolutely divided themselves from the Senate, with apparant shew of utter ruine, though he were for that time an excellent Orator, came not among them upon trust either of figurative speeches, or cunning insinuations, and much lesse with farre fet Maximes of Philosophie, which especially if they were Platonike, they must have learned Geometrie before they could well have conceived: but forsooth, he behaveth himselfe like a homely and familiar Poet. He telleth them a tale, that there was a time, when all the parts of the bodie made a mutinous conspiracie against the belly, which they thought devoured the frutes of each others labour: they concluded they would let so unprofitable a spender starve. In the end, to be short, for the tale is notorious, and as notorious that it was a tale, with punishing the belly they plagued themselves; this applied by him, wrought such effect in the people, as I never red, that onely words brought foorth: but then so suddaine and so good an alteration, for upon reasonable conditions, a perfect reconcilment ensued. The other is of Nathan the Prophet, who when the holie David, had so far forsaken God, as to confirme Adulterie with murther, when he was to do the tendrest office of a friend, in laying his owne shame before his eyes; sent by God

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The Defence of Poesie not onely farre passe the Historian, but for instructing is well nigh comparable to the Philosopher, for moving, leaveth him behind him. Since the holy scripture (wherein there is no uncleannesse) hath whole parts in it Poeticall, and that even our Savior Christ vouchsafed to use the flowers of it: since all his kindes are not onely in their united formes, but in their severed dissections fully commendable, I thinke, (and thinke I thinke rightly) the Lawrell Crowne appointed for tryumphant Captaines, doth worthily of all other learnings, honour the Poets triumph.

But bicause we have eares as well as toongs, and that the lightest reasons that may be, will seeme to waigh greatly, if nothing be put in the counterballance, let us heare, and as well as we can, ponder what objections be made against this Art, which may be woorthie either of yeelding, or answering. First truly I note, not onely in these *μισομοουσοι*, Poet-haters, but in all that kind of people who seek a praise, by dispraising others, that they do prodigally spend a great many wandring words in quips and scoffes, carping and taunting at each thing, which by sturring the spleene, may staie the braine from a through beholding the worthinesse of the subject. Those kind of objections, as they are full of a verie idle easinesse, since there is nothing of so sacred a majestie, but that an itching toong may rub itselfe upon it, so deserve they no other answer,

but instead of laughing at the jeast, to laugh at The De-
 the jeaster. We know a playing wit can praise fence of
 the discretion of an Asse, the comfortablenes of Poesie
 being in debt, and the jolly commodities of be-
 ing sicke of the plague. So of the contrary side,
 if we will turne Ovids verse, Ut lateat virtus,
 proximitate mali, that good lye hid, in nearnesse
 of the evill. Agrippa will be as mery in shewing
 the vanitie of Science, as Erasmus was in the com-
 mending of folly: neither shal any man or mat-
 ter, escape some touch of these smiling Raylers.
 But for Erasmus and Agrippa, they had another
 foundation then the superficial part would pro-
 mise. Marry these other pleasaunt fault-finders,
 who will correct the Verbe, before they under-
 stande the Nowne, and confute others knowledge,
 before they confirme their owne, I would have
 them onely remember, that scoffing commeth
 not of wisdom; so as the best title in true Eng-
 lish they get with their meriments, is to be called
 good fooles: for so have our grave forefathers
 ever tearmed that humorous kinde of jesters. But
 that which giveth greatest scope to their scorn-
 ing humor, is ryming and versing. It is alreadie
 said (and as I thinke truly said) it is not ryming
 and versing that maketh Poesie. One may be
 a Poet without versing, and a versefier without
 Poetrie. But yet presuppose it were inseperable,
 as indeed it seemeth Scalliger judgeth truly, it
 were an inseperable commendation. For if Oratio,

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next to Ratio, Speech next to Reason, be the greatest gift bestowed upon Mortalitie, that cannot bee praiselesse, which doth most polish that blessing of speech; which considereth each word not onely as a man may say by his forcible qualitie, but by his best measured quantity: carrying even in themselves a Harmonie, without perchance number, measure, order, proportion, be in our time growne odious. But laie aside the just praise it hath, by being the onely fit speech for Musicke, (Musicke I say the most divine striker of the senses) Thus much is undoubtedly true, that if reading be foolish without remembring, Memorie being the onely treasure of knowledge, those words which are fittest for memory, are likewise most convenient for knowledge. Now that Verse far exceedeth Prose, in the knitting up of the memorie, the reason is ✓ manifest, the words (besides their delight, which hath a great affinitie to memorie) being so set as one cannot be lost, but the whole woorke failes: which accusing itselfe, calleth the remembrance back to itselfe, and so most strongly confirmeth it. Besides one word, so as it were begetting an other, as be it in rime or measured verse, by the former a man shall have a neare gesse to the follower. Lastly even they that have taught the Art of memory, have shewed nothing so apt for it, as a certaine roome divided into many places, well and throughly knowne: Now that hath the verse

in effect perfectly, everie word having his natural seat, which seat must needs make the word remembered. But what needes more in a thing so knowne to all men. Who is it that ever was scholar, that doth not carry away som verses of Virgil, Horace, or Cato, which in his youth hee learned, and even to his old age serve him for hourelly lessons; as *Percontatorem fugito nam garrulus idem est, Dum tibi quisque; placet cre- dula turba sumas.* But the fitness it hath for memorie, is notably prooved by all deliverie of Arts, wherein for the most part, from Grammer, to Logick, Mathematickes, Phisick, and the rest, the Rules chiefly necessarie to be borne away, are compiled in verses. So that verse being in itselfe sweet and orderly, and being best for memorie, the onely handle of knowledge, it must be in jest that any man can speak against it. Now then goe we to the most important imputations laid to the poore Poets, for ought I can yet learne, they are these. First, that there beeing manie other more frutefull knowledges, a man might better spend his time in them, then in this. Secondly, that it is the mother of lyes. Thirdly, that it is the nurse of abuse, infecting us with many pestilent desires, with a Sirens sweetnesse, drawing the minde to the Serpents taile of sinfull fansies; and herein especially Comedies give the largest field to eare, as Chawcer saith, how both in other nations and in ours, before Poets did soften us,

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The Defence of Poesie we were full of courage given to martial exercises, the pillers of manlike libertie, and not lulled asleepe in shadie idlenes, with Poets pastimes. And lastly and chiefly, they cry out with open mouth as if they had overshot Robin-hood, that Plato banished them out of his Commonwealth. Truly this is much, if there be much truth in it. First to the first. That a man might better spend his time, is a reason indeed: but it doth as they say, but petere principium. For if it be, as I affirme, that no learning is so good, as that which teacheth and moveth to vertue, and that none can both [teach and move] thereto so much as Poesie, then is the conclusion manifest; that incke and paper cannot be to a more profitable purpose employed. And certainly though a man should graunt their first assumption, it should follow (mee thinks) very unwillingly, that good is not good, because better is better. But I still and utterly deny, that there is sprung out of earth a more fruitfull knowledge. To the second therfore, that they should be the principall lyers, I answer Paradoxically, but truly, I think truly: that of all writers under the Sunne, the Poet is the least lyer: and though he wold, as a Poet can scarcely be a lyer. The Astronomer with his cousin the Geometrician, can hardly escape, when they take upon them to measure the height of the starres. How often, thinke you do the Phisitians lie, when they averre things good for sicknesses, which

afterwards send Charon a great number of soules The De-
drownd in a potion, before they come to his fence of
Ferrie? And no lesse of the rest, which take upon Poesie
them to affirme. Now for the Poet, he nothing af-
firmeth, and therefore never lieth: for as I take it,
to lie, is to affirme that to bee true, which is false.
So as the other Artistes, and especially the His-
torian, affirming manie things, can in the clowdie
knowledge of mankinde, hardly escape from
manie lies. But the Poet as I said before, never af-
firmeth, the Poet never maketh any Circles about ✓
your imagination, to conjure you to beleeve for
true, what he writeth: he citeth not authorities
of other histories, but even for his entrie, calleth
the sweete Muses to inspire unto him a good in-
vention. In troth, not laboring to tel you what
is, or is not, but what should, or should not be.
And therefore though he recount things not true,
yet because he telleth them not for true, he lieth
not: without we will say, that Nathan lied in
his speech before alleaged to David, which as a
wicked man durst scarce say, so think I none so
simple, wold say, that Esope lied, in the tales of his
beasts: for who thinketh that Esope wrote it for
actually true, were wel worthie to have his name
Cronicled among the beasts he writeth of. What
childe is there, that comming to a play, and see-
ing Thebes written in great letters upon an old
doore, doth beleeve that it is Thebes? If then a
man can arrive to the childes age, to know that

The Defence of Poesie the Poets persons and dooings, are but pictures, what should be, and not stories what have bin, they will never give the lie to things not Affirmatively, but Allegorically and figurativelie written; and therefore as in historie looking for truth, they may go away full fraught with falshood: So in Poesie, looking but for fiction, they shall use the narration but as an imaginative groundplat of a profitable invention. But hereto is replied, that the Poets give names to men they write of, which argueth a conceit of an actuall truth, and so not being true, prooveth a falshood. And dooth the Lawier lye, then when under the names of John of the Stile and John of the Nokes, hee putteth his Case? But that is easily answered, their naming of men, is but to make their picture the more lively, and not to build anie Historie. Painting men, they cannot leave men namelesse: wee see, wee cannot plaie at Chesse, but that wee must give names to our Chessemen; and yet mee thinkes he were a verie partiall Champion of truth, that would say wee lyed, for giving a peece of wood the reverende title of a Bishop. The Poet nameth Cyrus and Æneas, no other way then to shewe what men of their fames, fortunes, and estates, should doo. Their third is, how much it abuseth mens wit, training it to wanton sinfulness, and lustfull love. For indeed that is the principall if not onely abuse, I can heare alleadged. They say the Comedies rather teach then repre-

hend amorous conceits. They say the Lirick, is larded with passionat Sonets, the Elegiack weeps the want of his mistresse, and that even to the Heroical, Cupid hath ambitiously climed. Alas Love, I would thou couldest as wel defend thyselfe, as thou canst offend others: I would those on whom thou doest attend, could either put thee away, or yeeld good reason why they keepe thee. But grant love of bewtie to be a beastly fault, although it be verie hard, since onely man and no beast hath that gift to discern bewtie, graunt, that lovely name of love to deserve all hatefull reproches, although even some of my maisters the Philosophers spent a good deale of their Lamp-oyle in setting foorth the excellencie of it, graunt I say, what they will have graunted, that not onelie love, but lust, but vanitie, but if they list scurrilitie, possesse manie leaves of the Poets bookes, yet thinke I, when this is graunted, they will finde their sentence may with good manners put the last words foremost; and not say, ✓ that Poetrie abuseth mans wit, but that mans wit abuseth Poetrie. For I will not denie, but that mans wit may make Poesie, which should be *εικαστικη*, which some learned have defined figuring foorth good thing to be *φανταστικη*, which doth contrariwise infect the fancie with unwoorthie objects, as the Painter should give to the eye either some excellent perspective, or some fine Picture fit for building or fortification, or

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The Defence of Poesie containing in it some notable example, as Abraham sacrificing his sonne Isaack, Judith killing Holofernes, David fighting with Golias, may leave those, and please an ill pleased eye with wanton shewes of better hidden matters. But what, shal the abuse of a thing, make the right use odious? Nay truly though I yeeld, that Poesie may not onely be abused, but that being abused by the reason of his sweete charming force, it cando more hurt then anie other armie of words: yet shall it be sofarre from concluding, that the abuse should give reproach to the abused, that contrariwise, it is a good reason, that whatsoever being abused, doth most harme, being rightly used (and upon the right use, ech thing receives his title) doth most good. Do we not see skill of Phisicke the best ramper to our often assaulted bodies, being abused, teach poyson the most violent destroyer? Doth not knowledge of Law, whose end is, to even and right all things, being abused, grow the crooked fosterer of horrible injuries? Doth not (to go to the highest) Gods word abused, breede heresie, and his name abused, become blasphemie? Truly a Needle cannot do much hurt, and as truly (with leave of Ladies be it spoken) it cannot do much good. With a sword thou maist kill thy Father, and with a sword thou maist defende thy Prince and Countrey: so that, as in their calling Poets, fathers of lies, they said nothing, so in this their argument of abuse, they

prove the commendation. They alledge herewith, that before Poets began to be in price, our Nation hath set their hearts delight uppon action, and not imagination, rather doing things worthie to be written, then writing things fit to be done. What that before time was, I think scarcely Spinx can tell: since no memerie is so ancient, that hath not the precedens of Poetrie. And certain it is, that in our plainest homelines, yet never was the Albion Nation without Poetrie. Marry this Argument, though it be leviled against Poetrie, yet is it indeed a chain-shot against all learning or bookishnes, as they commonly terme it. Of such mind were certaine Gothes, of whom it is written, that having in the spoile of a famous Cittie, taken a faire Librarie, one hangman belike fit to execute the frutes of their wits, who had murdered a great number of bodies, woulde have set fire in it. No said another verie gravely, take heed what you do, for while they are busie about those toyes, wee shall with more leisure conquere their Countries. This indeed is the ordinarie doctrine of ignorance, and many words sometimes I have heard spent in it: but bicause this reason is generally against al learning, as well as Poetrie, or rather all learning but Poetrie, because it were too large a digression to handle it, or at least too superfluous, since it is manifest that all government of action is to be gotten by knowledge, and knowledge best, by gathering manie

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knowledges, which is reading; I onely with Ho-
race, to him that is of that opinion, *Jubeo stultum
esse libenter*: for as for Poetrie itselfe, it is the
freest from this objection: for Poetrie is the Com-
panion of Camps. I dare undertake, Orlando
Furioso, or honest king Arthure, will never dis-
please a souldier: but the quidditie of Ens, and
Prima materia, will hardly agree with a Corce-
let. And therefore as I said in the beginning, even
Turkes and Tartars, are delighted with Poets.
Homer a Greeke, flourished, before Greece flour-
ished: and if to a slight conjecture, a conjecture
may bee apposed, truly it may seem, that as by
him their learned men tooke almost their first
light of knowledge, so their active men, received
their first motions of courage. Onely Alexanders
example may serve, who by Plutarche is ac-
counted of such vertue, that fortune was not his
guide, but his footestoole, whose Acts speake for
him, though Plutarche did not: indeede the Phœ-
nix of warlike Princes. This Alexander, left his
Schoolemaister living Aristotle behinde him, but
tooke dead Homer with him. Hee put the Phi-
losopher Callisthenes to death, for his seeming
Philosophicall, indeed mutinous stubbornnesse,
but the chiefe thing hee was ever heard to wish
for, was, that Homer had bene alive. Hee well
founde hee received more braverie of minde by
the paterne of Achilles, then by hearing the de-
finition of fortitude. And therefore, if Cato mis-

liked Fulvius, for carrying Ennius with him to the field, it may be answered, that if Cato misliked it, the Noble Fulvius liked it, or else he had not done it; for it was not the excellent Cato Uticensis, whose authoritie I would much more have revered: But it was the former, in truth a bitter punisher of faultes, but else a man that had never sacrificed to the Graces. Hee misliked and cried out against all Greeke learning, and yet being fourescore yeares olde beganne to learne it, belike fearing that Pluto understood not Latine. Indeed the Romane lawes allowed no person to bee carried to the warres, but hee that was in the souldiers Role. And therefore though Cato misliked his unmustred person, he misliked not his worke. And if hee had, Scipio Nasica (judged by common consent the best Romane) loved him: both the other Scipio brothers, who had by their vertues no lesse surnames then of Asia and Africke, so loved him, that they caused his bodie to be buried in their Sepulture. So as Catoes authoritie beeing but against his person, and that answered with so farre greater then himselfe, is herein of no validitie. But now indeede my burthen is great, that Plato his name is laide uppon mee, whom I must confesse of all Philosophers, I have ever esteemed most worthie of reverence; and with good reason, since of all Philosophers hee is the most Poeticall: yet if hee will defile the fountaine out of which his flowing

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The Defence of Poesie streames have proceeded, let us boldly examine with what reasons hee did it. First truly a man might maliciously object, that Plato being a Philosopher, was a naturall enemy of Poets. For indeede after the Philosophers had picked out of the sweete misteries of Poetrie, the right discerning true points of knowledge: they foorthwith putting it in methode, and making a Schoole Art of that which the Poets did onely teach by a divine delightfulness, beginning to spurne at their guides, like ungratefull Prentices, were not content to set up shop for themselves, but sought by all meanes to discredit their maisters, which by the force of delight being barred them, the lesse they could overthrow them, the more they hated them. For indeed they found for Homer, seven Cities strave who should have him for their Citizen, where many Cities banished Philosophers, as not fit members to live among them. For onely repeating certaine of Euripides verses, many Atheniens had their lives saved of the Siracusans, where the Atheniens themselves thought many Philosophers unworthie to live. Certaine Poets, as Simonides, and Pindarus, had so prevailed with Hiero the first, that of a Tyrant they made him a just King: where Plato could do so little with Dionisius, that he himselfe of a Philosopher, was made a slave. But who should do thus, I confesse should requite the objections made against Poets, with like cavillations against Philosophers:

as likewise one should do, that should bid one read The De-Phædrus, or Symposium in Plato, or the discourse fence of love in Plutarch, and see whether any Poet do Poesie authorise abominable filthinesse as they doo. Againe, a man might aske, out of what Commonwealth Plato doth banish them, in sooth, thence where he himselfe alloweth communitie of women. So as belike this banishment grew not for effeminate wantonnesse, since little should Poeticall Sonnets be hurtful, when a man might have what woman he listed. But I honor Philosophicall instructions, and blesse the wits which bred them: so as they be not abused, which is likewise stretched to Poetrie. S. Paul himselfe sets a watch-word uppon Philosophie, indeed uppon the abuse. So doth Plato uppon the abuse, not upon Poetrie. Plato found fault that the Poettes of his time, filled the worlde with wrong opinions of the Gods, making light tales of that unspotted essence; and therefore wold not have the youth depraved with such opinions: heerein may much be said; let this suffice. The Poets did not induce such opinions, but did imitate those opinions already induced. For all the Greeke stories can well testifie, that the verie religion of that time, stood upon many, and many fashioned Gods: Not taught so by Poets, but followed according to their nature of imitation. Who list may read in Plutarch, the discourses of Isis and Osiris, of the cause why Oracles ceased, of the divine providence, and

The De- see whether the Theology of that nation, stood
fence of not upon such dreams, which the Poets indeede
Poesie superstitiously observed. And truly since they
had not the light of Christ, did much better in it,
then the Philosophers, who shaking off superstition,
brought in Atheisme. Plato therefore, whose
authoritie, I had much rather justly construe, then
unjustly resist: ment not in generall of Poets, in
those words of which Julius Scaliger saith; *Qua
authoritate barbari quidam atque hispidi abuti
velint ad poetas è rep. Exigendos.* But only ment,
to drive out those wrong opinions of the Deitie:
wherof now without further law, Christianitie
hath taken away all the hurtful believe, perchance
as he thought nourished by then esteemed Poets.
And a man need go no further then to Plato
himselſe to knowe his meaning: who in his Dialogue
called Ion, giveth high, and rightly, divine
commendation unto Poetrie. So as Plato banishing
the abuse, not the thing, not banishing it,
but giving due honour to it, shall be our Patron,
and not our adversarie. For indeed, I had much
rather, since truly I may do it, shew their mistaking
of Plato, under whose Lyons skinne, they would
make an Aslike braying against Poesie, then go
about to overthrow his authoritie; whom the wiser
a man is, the more just cause he shall finde to
have in admiration: especially since he attributeth
unto Poesie, more then myselſe do; namely, to be
a verie inspiring of a divine force,

farre above mans wit, as in the forenamed Dia- The De-
 logue is apparant. Of the other side, who would fence of
 shew the honours have bene by the best sort of Poesie
 judgements graunted them, a whole sea of ex-
 amples woulde present themselves; Alexanders,
 Cæsars, Scipioes, all favourers of Poets: Loelius,
 called the Romane Socrates himselfe a Poet; so
 as part of Heautontimoroumenon in Terence, was
 supposed to bee made by him. And even the
 Greeke Socrates, whome Appollo confirmed to be
 the onely wise man, is said to have spent part of
 his olde time in putting Esopes Fables into verses.
 And therefore full evill should it become his
 scholler Plato, to put such words in his maisters
 mouth against Poets. But what needs more? Aris-
 totle writes the Arte of Poesie, and why, if it
 should not bee written? Plutarcke teacheth the
 use to bee gathered of them, and how, if they
 should not bee reade? And who reades Plu-
 tarches either Historie or Philosophie, shall finde
 hee trimmeth both their garments with gardes of
 Poesie. But I list not to defend Poesie with the
 helpe of his underling Historiographie. Let it suf-
 fice to have shewed, it is a fit soyle for praise to
 dwell uppon: and what dispraise may set up-
 pon it, is either easily overcome, or transformed
 into just commendation. So that since the ex-
 cellencies of it, may bee so easily and so justly
 confirmed, and the lowe creeping objections so
 soone trodden downe, it not beeing an Art of

The Defence of Poesie lyes, but of true doctrine; not of effoeminate-
ness, but of notable stirring of courage; not of
abusing mans wit, but of strengthening mans wit;
not banished, but honored by Plato; Let us rather
plant more Lawrels for to ingarland the Poets
heads (which honor of being Lawreate, as be-
sides them onely triumphant Captaines were, is
a sufficient authoritie to shewe the price they
ought to bee held in) then suffer the ill savoured
breath of such wrong speakers once to blow up-
pon the cleare springs of Poesie. But since I have
runne so long a Carrier in this matter, me thinkes
before I give my penne a full stoppe, it shall be
but a litle more lost time, to enquire why England
the Mother of excellent mindes should be growne
so hard a stepmother to Poets, who certainly in
wit ought to passe all others, since all onely pro-
ceedes from their with, beeing indeed makers of
themselves, not takers of others. How can I but
exclaime, *Musa mihi causas memora quo numine
læso*, Sweete Poesie that hath aunciently had
Kings, Emperours, Senatours, great Captaines,
such as besides a thousandes others, David, Adri-
an, Sophocles, Germanicus, not onelie to favour
Poets, but to bee Poets: and of our nearer times,
can present for her Patrons, a Robert, King of Sci-
cill, the great King Fraunces of Fraunce, King
James of Scotland; such Cardinalls as Bembus, and
Bibiena; suche famous Preachers and Teachers, as
Beza and Melanchthon; so learned Philosophers,

as Fracastorius, and Scaliger; so great Orators, The De-
as Pontanus, and Muretus; so pearcing wits, as fence of
George Buchanan; so grave Counsailours, as be- Poesie
sides manie, but before all, that Hospitall of
Fraunce; then whome I thinke that Realme never
brought forth a more accomplished judgement;
more firmly builded upon vertue: I say these
with numbers of others, not onely to read others
Poesies, but to poetise for others reading; that
Poesie thus embraced in all other places, should
onely finde in our time a hard welcome in Eng-
land. I thinke the verie earth laments it, and there-
fore deckes our soyle with fewer Lawrels then
it was accustomed. For heretofore, Poets have in
England also flourished: and which is to be noted,
even in those times when the Trumpet of Mars
did sound lowdest. And now that an overfaint
quietnesse should seeme to strowe the house for
Poets, they are almost in as good reputation, as
the Mountebanckes at Venice. Truly even that,
as of the one side it giveth great praise to Poesie,
which like Venus (but to better purpose) hath
rather be troubled in the net with Mars, then en-
joy the homely quiet of Vulcan. So serveth it for
a peece of a reason, why they are lesse gratefull
to idle England, which now can scarce endure
the paine of a penne. Upon this necessarily fol-
loweth, that base men with servill wits undertake
it, who thinke it inough if they can be rewarded
of the Printer: and so as Epaminandas is said with

The De- the honor of his vertue to have made an Office,
 fence of by his exercising it, which before was contemti-
 Poesie ble, to become highly respected: so these men
 no more but setting their names to it, by their
 own disgracefulnesse, disgrace the most gracefull
 Poesie. For now as if all the Muses were got with
 childe, to bring forth bastard Poets: without any
 commission, they do passe over the Bankes of
 Helicon, till they make the Readers more wearie
 then Post-horses: while in the mean time, they
 Queis meliore luto finxit præcordia Titan, are bet-
 ter content to suppress the out-flowings of their
 wit, then by publishing them, to be accounted
 Knights of the same order. But I that before ever
 I durst aspire unto the dignitie, am admitted into
 the companie of the Paper-blurrers, do finde the
 verie true cause of our wanting estimation, is
 want of desert, taking upon us to be Poets, in
 despite of Pallas. Now wherein we want desert,
 were a thankwoorthie labour to expresse. But if
 I knew I should have mended myselfe, but as
 I never desired the title, so have I neglected the
 meanes to come by it, onely over-mastered by
 some thoughts, I yeelded an inckie tribute unto
 them. Marrie they that delight in Poesie itselfe,
 should seek to know what they do, and how they
 do: and especially looke themselves in an unflat-
 tering glasse of reason, if they be enclinable unto
 it. For Poesie must not be drawne by the eares,
 it must be gently led, or rather it must lead, which

was partly the cause, that made the auncient The De-
 learned affirme, it was a divine gift and no hu- fence of
 mane skil: since all other knowledges lie readie for Poesie
 anie that have strength of wit: A Poet no indus-
 trie can make, if his owne Genius be not carried
 into it. And therefore is an old Proverbe, Orator
 fit, Poeta nascitur. Yet confesse I alwaies, that as
 the fertilest ground must be manured, so must
 the highest flying wit have a Dedalus to guide
 him. That Dedalus they say both in this and in
 other, hath three wings to beare itselfe up into the
 aire of due commendation: that is Art, Imitation,
 and Exercise. But these neither Artificiall Rules,
 nor imitative paternes, we much comber our-
 selves withall. Exercise indeed we do, but that
 verie fore-back-wardly; for where we should ex-
 ercise to know, we exercise as having knowne:
 and so is our braine delivered of much matter,
 which never was begotten by knowledge. For
 there being two principall parts, Matter to be ex-
 pressed by words, and words to expresse the mat-
 ter: In neither, wee use Art or imitation rightly.
 Our matter is, Quodlibet, indeed though wrongly
 performing, Ovids Verse. Quicquid conabor di-
 cere Versus erit: never marshalling it into anie
 assured ranck, that almost the Readers cannot tell
 where to finde themselves. Chawcer undoubt-
 edly did excellently in his Troilus and Creseid:
 of whome trulie I knowe not whether to mervaile
 more, either that hee in that mistie time could see

The Defence of Poesie streames have proceeded, let us boldly examine with what reasons hee did it. First truly a man might maliciously object, that Plato being a Philosopher, was a naturall enemy of Poets. For indeede after the Philosophers had picked out of the sweete misteries of Poetrie, the right discerning true points of knowledge: they foorthwith putting it in methode, and making a Schoole Art of that which the Poets did onely teach by a divine delightfulness, beginning to spurne at their guides, like ungratefull Prentices, were not content to set up shop for themselves, but sought by all meanes to discredit their maisters, which by the force of delight being barred them, the lesse they could overthrow them, the more they hated them. For indeed they found for Homer, seven Cities strave who should have him for their Citizen, where many Cities banished Philosophers, as not fit members to live among them. For onely repeating certaine of Euripides verses, many Atheniens had their lives saved of the Siracusans, where the Atheniens themselves thought many Philosophers unworthie to live. Certaine Poets, as Simonides, and Pindarus, had so prevailed with Hiero the first, that of a Tyrant they made him a just King: where Plato could do so little with Dionisius, that he himselfe of a Philosopher, was made a slave. But who should do thus, I confesse should requite the objections made against Poets, with like cavillations against Philosophers:

as likewise one should do, that should bid one read The De-Phædrus, or Symposium in Plato, or the discourse of love in Plutarch, and see whether any Poet do Poesie authorise abominable filthinesse as they doo. Againe, a man might aske, out of what Commonwealth Plato doth banish them, in sooth, thence where he himselfe alloweth communitie of women. So as belike this banishment grew not for effeminate wantonnesse, since little should Poeticall Sonnets be hurtful, when a man might have what woman he listed. But I honor Philosophicall instructions, and blesse the wits which bred them: so as they be not abused, which is likewise stretched to Poetrie. S. Paul himselfe sets a watch-word uppon Philosophie, indeed uppon the abuse. So doth Plato uppon the abuse, not uppon Poetrie. Plato found fault that the Poettes of his time, filled the worlde with wrong opinions of the Gods, making light tales of that unspotted essence; and therefore wold not have the youth depraved with such opinions: heerein may much be said; let this suffice. The Poets did not induce such opinions, but did imitate those opinions already induced. For all the Greeke stories can well testifie, that the verie religion of that time, stood upon many, and many fashioned Gods: Not taught so by Poets, but followed according to their nature of imitation. Who list may read in Plutarch, the discourses of Isis and Osiris, of the cause why Oracles ceased, of the divine providence, and

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farre above mans wit, as in the forenamed Dialogue is apparant. Of the other side, who would shew the honours have bene by the best sort of judgements graunted them, a whole sea of examples woulde present themselves; Alexanders, Cæsars, Scipioes, all favourers of Poets: Lœlius, called the Romane Socrates himselfe a Poet; so as part of Heautontimoroumenon in Terence, was supposed to bee made by him. And even the Greeke Socrates, whome Appollo confirmed to be the onely wise man, is said to have spent part of his olde time in putting Esopes Fables into verses. And therefore full evill should it become his scholler Plato, to put such words in his maisters mouth against Poets. But what needs more? Aristotle writes the Arte of Poesie, and why, if it should not bee written? Plutarche teacheth the use to bee gathered of them, and how, if they should not bee reade? And who reades Plutarches either Historie or Philosophie, shall finde hee trimmeth both their garments with gardes of Poesie. But I list not to defend Poesie with the helpe of his underling Historiographie. Let it suffice to have shewed, it is a fit soyle for praise to dwell uppon: and what dispraise may set uppon it, is either easily overcome, or transformed into just commendation. So that since the excellencies of it, may bee so easily and so justly confirmed, and the lowe creeping objections so soone trodden downe, it not being an Art of

The De- see whether the Theology of that nation, stood
 fence of not upon such dreams, which the Poets indeede
 Poesie superstitiously observed. And truly since they
 had not the light of Christ, did much better in it,
 then the Philosophers, who shaking off superstition,
 brought in Atheisme. Plato therefore, whose
 authoritie, I had much rather justly construe, then
 unjustly resist: ment not in generall of Poets, in
 those words of which Julius Scaliger saith; *Qua
 autoritate barbari quidam atque hispidi abuti
 velint ad poetas è rep. Exigendos.* But only ment,
 to drive out those wrong opinions of the Deitie:
 wherof now without further law, Christianitie
 hath taken away all the hurtful beliefe, perchance
 as he thought nourished by then esteemed Poets.
 And a man need go no further then to Plato
 himselfe to knowe his meaning: who in his Dialogue
 called Ion, giveth high, and rightly, divine
 commendation unto Poetrie. So as Plato banishing
 the abuse, not the thing, not banishing it,
 but giving due honour to it, shall be our Patron,
 and not our adversarie. For indeed, I had much
 rather, since truly I may do it, shew their mistaking
 of Plato, under whose Lyons skinne, they would
 make an Aslike braying against Poesie, then go
 about to overthrow his authoritie; whom the
 wiser a man is, the more just cause he shall
 finde to have in admiration: especially since he
 attributeth unto Poesie, more then myselfe do;
 namely, to be a verie inspiring of a divine force,

farre above mans wit, as in the forenamed Dia- The De-
 logue is apparant. Of the other side, who would fence of
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The Defence of Poesie

lyes, but of true doctrine; not of effoeminate-
nesse, but of notable stirring of courage; not of
abusing mans wit, but of strengthening mans wit;
not banished, but honored by Plato; Let us rather
plant more Lawrels for to ingarland the Poets
heads (which honor of being Lawreate, as be-
sides them onely triumphant Captaines were, is
a sufficient authoritie to shewe the price they
ought to bee held in) then suffer the ill savoured
breath of such wrong speakers once to blow up-
pon the cleare springs of Poesie. But since I have
runne so long a Carrier in this matter, me thinkes
before I give my penne a full stoppe, it shall be
but a litle more lost time, to enquire why England
the Mother of excellent mindes should be growne
so hard a stepmother to Poets, who certainly in
wit ought to passe all others, since all onely pro-
ceedes from their with, beeing indeed makers of
themselves, not takers of others. How can I but
exclaime, *Musa mihi causas memora quo numine
læso*, Sweete Poesie that hath aunciently had
Kings, Emperours, Senatours, great Captaines,
such as besides a thousandes others, David, Adri-
an, Sophocles, Germanicus, not onelie to favour
Poets, but to bee Poets: and of our nearer times,
can present for her Patrons, a Robert, King of Sci-
cill, the great King Fraunces of Fraunce, King
James of Scotland; such Cardinalls as Bembus, and
Bibiena; suche famous Preachers and Teachers, as
Beza and Melanchthon; so learned Philosophers,

as Fracastorius, and Scaliger; so great Orators, The De-
as Pontanus, and Muretus; so pearcing wits, as fence of
George Buchanan; so grave Counsailours, as be- Poesie
sides manie, but before all, that Hospitall of
Fraunce; then whome I thinke that Realme never
brought forth a more accomplished judgement;
more firmly builded upon vertue: I say these
with numbers of others, not onely to read others
Poesies, but to poetise for others reading; that
Poesie thus embraced in all other places, should
onely finde in our time a hard welcome in Eng-
land. I thinke the verie earth laments it, and there-
fore deckes our soyle with fewer Lawrels then
it was accustomed. For heretofore, Poets have in
England also flourished: and which is to be noted,
even in those times when the Trumpet of Mars
did sound lowdest. And now that an overfaint
quietnesse should seeme to strowe the house for
Poets, they are almost in as good reputation, as
the Mountebanckes at Venice. Truly even that,
as of the one side it giveth great praise to Poesie,
which like Venus (but to better purpose) hath
rather be troubled in the net with Mars, then en-
joy the homely quiet of Vulcan. So serveth it for
a peece of a reason, why they are lesse gratefull
to idle England, which now can scarce endure
the paine of a penne. Upon this necessarily fol-
loweth, that base men with servill wits undertake
it, who thinke it inough if they can be rewarded
of the Printer: and so as Epaminandas is said with

The De- the honor of his vertue to have made an Office,
 fence of by his exercising it, which before was contemti-
 Poesie ble, to become highly respected: so these men
 no more but setting their names to it, by their
 own disgracefulnesse, disgrace the most gracefull
 Poesie. For now as if all the Muses were got with
 childe, to bring forth bastard Poets: without any
 commission, they do passe over the Bankes of
 Helicon, till they make the Readers more wearie
 then Post-horses: while in the mean time, they
 Queis meliore luto finxit præcordia Titan, are bet-
 ter content to suppress the out-flowings of their
 wit, then by publishing them, to be accounted
 Knights of the same order. But I that before ever
 I durst aspire unto the dignitie, am admitted into
 the companie of the Paper-blurrers, do finde the
 verie true cause of our wanting estimation, is
 want of desert, taking upon us to be Poets, in
 despite of Pallas. Now wherein we want desert,
 were a thankwoorthie labour to expresse. But if
 I knew I should have mended myselfe, but as
 I never desired the title, so have I neglected the
 meanes to come by it, onely over-mastered by
 some thoughts, I yeilded an inckie tribute unto
 them. Marrie they that delight in Poesie itselfe,
 should seek to know what they do, and how they
 do: and especially looke themselves in an unflat-
 tering glasse of reason, if they be enclinable unto
 it. For Poesie must not be drawne by the eares,
 it must be gently led, or rather it must lead, which

was partly the cause, that made the auncient The De-
 learned affirme, it was a divine gift and no hu- fence of
 mane skil: since all other knowledges lie readie for Poesie
 anie that have strength of wit: A Poet no indus-
 trie can make, if his owne Genius be not carried
 into it. And therefore is an old Proverbe, Orator
 fit, Poeta nascitur. Yet confesse I alwaies, that as
 the fertilest ground must be manured, so must
 the highest flying wit have a Dedalus to guide
 him. That Dedalus they say both in this and in
 other, hath three wings to beare itselfe up into the
 aire of due commendation: that is Art, Imitation,
 and Exercise. But these neither Artificiall Rules,
 nor imitative paternes, we much comber our-
 selves withall. Exercise indeed we do, but that
 verie fore-back-wardly; for where we should ex-
 ercise to know, we exercise as having knowne:
 and so is our braine delivered of much matter,
 which never was begotten by knowledge. For
 there being two principall parts, Matter to be ex-
 pressed by words, and words to expresse the mat-
 ter: In neither, wee use Art or imitation rightly.
 Our matter is, Quodlibet, indeed though wrongly
 performing, Ovids Verse. Quicquid conabor di-
 cere Versus erit: never marshalling it into anie
 assured ranck, that almost the Readers cannot tell
 where to finde themselves. Chawcer undoubt-
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The Defence of Poesie for both sorts: for, for the auncient, the Italian is so full of Vowels, that it must ever be combred with Elisions. The Duch so of the other side with Consonants, that they cannot yeeld the sweete slyding, fit for a Verse. The French in his whole language, hath not one word that hath his accent in the last sillable, saving two, called Antepenultima; and little more hath the Spanish, and therefore verie gracelesly may they use Dactiles. The English is subject to none of these defects. Now for Rime, though we doo not observe quantitie, yet wee observe the Accent verie precisely, which other languages either cannot do, or will not do so absolutely. That Cæsura, or breathing place in the midst of the Verse, neither Italian nor Spanish have: the French and we, never almost faile off. Lastly, even the verie Rime itselfe, the Italian cannot put it in the last sillable, by the French named the Masculine Rime; but still in the next to the last, which the French call the Female; or the next before that, which the Italians terme Sdrucchiola: the example of the former, is Buono, Suono, of the Sdrucchiola is Femina, Semina. The French of the other side, hath both the Male as Bon, Son, and the Female, as Plaise, Taise; but the Sdrucchiola, he hath not: where the English hath all three, as Du, Trew, Father, Rather, Motion, Potion, with much more which might be sayd, but that alreadie I finde the triflings of this discourse is much too much enlarged. So that since

the ever praise-woorthie Poesie is full of vertue breeding delightfulnessse, and voyd of no gift that ought to be in the noble name of learning: since the blames layd against it, are either false or feeble, since the cause why it is not esteemed in England, is the fault of Poet-apes, not Poets. Since lastly our tongue is most fit to honour Poesie, and to bee honoured by Poesie, I conjure you all that have had the evill luck to read this inck-wasting toy of mine, even in the name of the nine Muses, no more to scorne the sacred misteries of Poesie. No more to laugh at the name of Poets, as though they were next inheritors to fooles; no more to jest at the reverent title of a Rimer, but to beleeve with Aristotle, that they were the auncient Treasurers of the Grecians divinitie; to beleeve with Bembus, that they were first bringers in of all Civilitie; to beleeve with Scalliger that no Philosophers precepts can sooner make you an honest man, then the reading of Virgil; to beleeve with Clauserus, the Translator of Cornutus, that it pleased the heavenly deitie by Hesiod and Homer, under the vaile of Fables to give us all knowledge, Logicke, Rhetoricke, Philosophie, naturall and morall, and Quid non? To beleeve with me, that there are many misteries contained in Poetrie, which of purpose were written darkly, least by prophane wits it should be abused: To beleeve with Landin, that they are so beloved of the Gods, that whatsoever they write, pro-

The Defence of Poesie

The De- ceeds of a divine furie. Lastly, to beleeeve them-
 fence of selves when they tell you they will make you
 Poesie immortal, by their verses. Thus doing, your name
 shall flourish in the Printers shops. Thus doing you
 shall be of kin to many a Poeticall Preface. Thus
 doing, you shall be most faire, most rich, most
 wise, most all: you shall dwell upon Superla-
 tives. Thus doing, though you be *Libertino patre*
natus, you shall sodeinly grow *Herculea proles*.
Si quid mea carmina possunt. Thus doing, your
 soule shall be placed with *Dantes Beatrix*, or *Vir-*
gils Anchises. But if (fie of such a but) you be
 borne so neare the dull-making Cataract of *Ni-*
lus, that you cannot heare the Planet-like Mu-
 sicke of Poetrie; if you have so earth-creeping
 a mind that it cannot lift itselfe up to looke to the
 skie of Poetrie, or rather by a certaine rusticall
 disdain, will become such a mome, as to be a *Mo-*
mus of Poetrie: then though I will not wish unto
 you the *Asses eares* of *Midas*, nor to be driven
 by a Poets verses as *Bubonax* was, to hang him-
 selfe, nor to be rimed to death as is said to be
 done in Ireland, yet thus much Curse I must send
 you in the behalfe of all Poets, that while you
 live, you live in love, and never get favour,
 for lacking skill of a Sonet, and when
 you die, your memorie die from
 the earth, for want of an
 Epitaphe.

FINIS

A LETTER TO QUEEN ELIZABETH
Perswading Her not to Marry with
the Duke of Anjou
Anno 1580

2



A LETTER TO QUEEN ELIZABETH

* *
* *

Most Feared and Beloved, most Sweet and Gracious Sovereign,



O seek out Excuses of this my Boldness, and to arm the Acknowledging of a Fault with Reasons for it, might better shew I knew I did amis, than any Way diminish the Attempt, especially in your Judgment; who being able to discern lively into the Nature of the Thing done, it were Folly to hope, by laying on better Colours, to make it more acceptable. Therefore carrying no other Olive-branch of Intercession, then the Laying of my self at your Feet; nor no other Insinuation, either for Attention or Pardon, but the true vowed Sacrifice of unfeigned Love; I will, in simple and direct Terms (as hoping they shall only come to your mercifull Eyes) set down the Overflowing of my Mind in this most important Matter, importing, as I think, the Continuance of your Safety; and, as I know, the Joys of my Life. And because my Words (I confess shallow, but coming from the deep Well-spring of most loyal Affection) have delivered to your most gracious Ear, what is the general Sum of my travelling Thoughts therein;

A Letter to Queen Elizabeth I will now but only declare, what be the Reasons that make me think, that the Marriage with Monsieur will be unprofitable unto you; then will I answer the Objection of those Fears, which might procure so violent a Refuge.

The Good or Evils that will come by it, must be considered, either according to your Estate or Person. To your Estate, what can be added to the being an absolute born, and accordingly respected, Princess? But, as they say the Irishmen, are wont to call over them that die, "They are rich, they are fair, what needed they to dye so cruelly:" Not unfitly of You, endowed with Felicity above all others, a Man might well ask; what makes you in such a Calm to change Course; to so healthfull a Body, to apply so unsavory a Medicine: What can recompence so hazardous an Adventure: Indeed, were it but the Altering of a well maintained, and well approved Trade: For, as in Bodies natural, every sudden Change is full of Peril; so in this Body Politick, whereof you are the only Head, it is so much the more dangerous, as there are more Humours to receive a hurtful Impression. But Hazards are then most to be regarded, when the Nature of the Patient is fitly composed to occasion them.

The Patient I account your Realm; the Agent Monsieur, and his Design; for neither outward Accidents do much prevail against a true inward Strength; nor doth inward Weakness lightly sub-

vert itself, without being thrust at by some outward Force.

Your inward Force (for as for your Treasures indeed, the Sinews of your Crown, your Majesty doth best and only know) consisteth in your Subjects, generally unexpert in warlike Defence; and as they are divided now into mighty Factions (and Factions bound on the never dying Knot of Religion) the one of them, to whom your happy Government hath granted the free Exercise of the eternal Truth; with this, by the Continuance of Time, by the Multitude of them; by the principal Offices, and Strength they hold; and lastly, by your Dealings both at Home and Abroad against the adverse Party; your State is so entrapped, as it were impossible for you, without excessive Trouble, to pull your self out of the Party so long maintained. For such a Course once taken in Hand, is not much unlike a Ship in a Tempest, which how dangerously soever it may be beaten with Waves, yet is there no Safety or Succour without it: These, therefore, as their Soules live by your happy Government, so are they your chief, if not your sole Strength: These, howsoever the Necessity of humane Life makes them lack, yet can they not look for better Conditions then presently they enjoy: These, how their Hearts will be galled, if not aliened, when they shall see you take a Husband, a Frenchman and a Papist, in whom (howsoever fine Wits may

A Letter to
Queen
Elizabeth

A Letter to Queen Elizabeth find further Dealings or painted Excuses) the very common People well know this; that he is the Son of a Jezebel of our Age: That his Brother made Oblation of his own Sisters Marriage, the easier to make Massacres of our Brethren in Belief: That he himself, contrary to his Promise, and all Gratefulness, having his Liberty and principal Estate by the Hugonots Means, did sack Lacharists, and utterly spoil them with Fire and Sword. This, I say, even at first Sight, gives Occasion to all, truly religious, to abhor such a Master, and consequently to diminish much of the hopefull Love, they have long held to you.

The other Faction, most rightly indeed, to be called a Faction, is the Papists; Men, whose Spirits are full of Anguish, some being infested by others, whom they accounted damnable; some having their Ambition stopped, because they are not in the Way of Advancement; some in Prison and Disgrace; some whose best Friends are banished Practisers; many thinking you are an Usurper; many thinking also you had disannulled your Right, because of the Popes Excommunication; all burthened with the Weight of their Conscience; Men of great Numbers, of great Riches (because the Affaires of State have not lain on them) of united Minds (as all Men that deem themselves oppressed naturally are) With these, I would willingly join all discontented Persons, such as Want and Disgrace keep lower than

they have set their Hearts; such as have resolved what to look for at your Hands; such as Cæsar said, Quibus opus est bello civili, and are of his Mind, malo in acie, quam in foro cadere. These be Men so much the more to be doubted, because, as they do embrace all Estates; so are they commonly of the bravest and wakefullest Sort; and that know the Advantage of the World most. This double Rank of People, how their Minds have stood, the Northern Rebellion, and infinite other Practises, have well taught you; which, if it be said, it did not prevail, that is true indeed; for if they had prevailed, it were too late now to deliberate. But, at this present, they want nothing so much as a Head, who, in Effect, needs not but to receive their Instructions; since they may do Mischief only with his Countenance. Let the Singiniam in Henry the Fourths Time, Perkin Warbeck in your Grandfathers; but of all the most lively and proper, is that of Lewis the French Kings Son, in Henry the Thirds Time; who having at all no Shew of Title, yet did he cause the Nobility, and more, to swear direct Fealty and Vassalage; and they delivered the strongest Holds unto him. I say, let these be sufficient to prove, that Occasion gives Mindes and Scope to stranger Things, than ever would have been imagined. If then the affectionate Side, have their Affections weakned, and the Discontented have a Gap to utter their Discontent; I think it will

A Letter to
Queen
Elizabeth

A Letter to seem an ill Preparative for the Patient (I mean
to your Estate) to a great Sickness.

Queen Elizabeth
Now the Agent Party, which is Monsieur:
Whether he be not apt to work on the Disadvantage of your Estate, he is to be judged by his Will and Power; his Will to be as full of light Ambition, as is possible; besides the French Disposition, and his own Education; his inconstant Temper against his Brother; his Thrusting himself into the Low Country Matters; his sometimes Seeking the King of Spains Daughter; sometimes your Majesty; are evident Testimonies of his being carried away with every Wind of Hope; taught to love Greatness any Way gotten; and having for the Motioners and Ministers of the Mind, only such young Men, as have shewed they think evil Contentment a Ground of any Rebellion, who have seen no Commonwealth, but in Faction; and divers of which have defiled their Hands in odious Murthers: With such Fancies and Favourites, what is to be hoped for; or that he will contain himself within the Limits of your Conditions; since, in Truth, it were strange, that he that cannot be contented to be the second Person in France, and Heir apparent, should be content to come to be a second Person, where he should pretend no Way to Sovereignty. His Power, I imagine, is not to be despised, since he is come into a Country, where the Way of evil Doing will be presented unto him; where there

needs nothing but a Head, to draw together all the ill-affected Members: Himself a Prince of great Revenues, of the most popular Nation of the World, full of Souldiery, and such as are used to serve without Pay, so as they may have Shew of Spoil; and, without Question, shall have his Brother ready to help him, as well for old Revenge, as to divert him from troubling France, and to deliver his own Country from evil Humours. Neither is King Philips Marriage here any Example; since then it was between two of one Religion, so that only he in England, stood only upon her Strength, and had Abroad King Henry of France, ready to impeach any Enterprize he should make for his Greatness that Way. And, yet, what Events Time would have brought forth of that Marriage, your most blessid Reign hath made vain all such Considerations. But Things holding in present State, I think I may easily conclude, that your Country as well by long Peace, and Fruits of Peace, as by the Poison of Division, wherewith the Faithfull shall by this Meanes be wounded, and the contrary enabled, made fit to receive Hurt; and Monsieur being every Way likely to use the Occasions to hurt, there can almost happen no worldly Thing of more eminent Danger to your Estate Royal. And as to your Person, in the Scale of your Happiness, what Good there may come by it, to ballance with the Loss of so honourable a Constancy; truly,

A Letter to
Queen
Elizabeth

A Letter
to
Queen
Eliza-
beth

yet I perceive not. I will not shew so much Malice, as to object the universal Doubt, the Races Unfaithfulness; neither will I lay to his Charge the Ague-like Manner of Proceedings, sometimes hot and sometimes cold, in the Time of Pursuit; which always rightly is most fervent: And I will temper my Speeches from any other unreverend Disgracings of him, in particular; (though they might be never so true) this only will I say, that if he do come hither, he must live here in far less Reputation than his Mind will well brook, having no other Royalty to countenance himself with; or else you must deliver him the Keys of your Kingdom, and live at his Discretion; or, lastly, he must be seperate himself, with more Dishonour, and further Disuniting of Heart, than ever before. Often have I heard you, with Protestation, say, no private Pleasure, nor Self-affection, could lead you to it; but if it be both unprofitable for your Kingdom, and unpleasant to you, certainly it were a dear Purchase of Repentance; nothing can it add unto you, but the Bliss of Children, which, I confess, were a most unspeakable Comfort; but yet no more appertaining unto him, than to any other, to whom the Height of all good Haps, were allotted to be your Husband; and therefore I may assuredly affirm, that what Good soever can follow Marriage, is no more his than any Bodies; but the Evils and Dangers are peculiarly annexed to his Person, and Condition. For,

as for the Enriching of your Country with Treasure, which either he hath not, or hath otherwise bestowed it; or the Staying of your Servants Minds with new Expectations and Liberality, which is more dangerous than fruitfull; or the Easing of your Majesty of Cases, which is as much as to say, as the Easing of you to be Queen and Sovereign: I think every one perceives this Way to be full of Hurt, or void of Help. Now resteth to consider, what be the Motives of this sudden Change, as I have heard you in most sweet Words deliver; Fear of standing alone, in Respect of foreign Dealings; and in them, from whom you should have Respect, doubt of Contempt. Truly, Standing alone, with good Foresight of Government, both in Peace and Warlike Defence, is the honourablest Thing that can be, to a well established Monarchy; those Buildings being ever most strongly durable, which lean to none other, but remain from their own Foundation.

A Letter to,
Queen Elizabeth

So yet in the Particulars of your Estate at present, I will not altogether deny that a true Massinissa, were fit to countermine the Enterprize of mighty Carthage: But how this general Truth, can be applied to Monsieur; in Truth I perceive not. The Wisest that have given best Rules, where surest Leagues are made, have said, that it must be between such as either vehement Desire of a 3d Thing, or as vehement Fear, doth knit their Minds together. Desire is counted the weaker

A Letter to Queen Elizabeth
Bond, but yet that bound so many Princes to the Holy Land. It united that invincible King Henry V, and that good Duke of Burgundy; the one desiring to win the Crown of France from the Dauphin, the other desiring to revenge his Fathers Murther upon the Dauphin; which both tended to one. That coupled Lewis XII, and Ferdinando of Spain to the Conquest of Naples. Of Fear, there are innumerable Examples: Monsieurs Desires, and yours, how they shall meet in publick Matters, I think no Oracle can tell; for as the Geomaticians say, that Parallels, because they maintain divers Lines, can never join: So truly, two, having in the Beginning contrary Principles, to bring forth one Doctrine, must be some Miracle. He of the Romish Religion; and if he be a Man, must needs have that manlike Property, to desire that all Men be of his Mind: You the Erector and Defender of the contrary, and the only Sun that dasleth their Eyes: He French, and desiring to make France great: Your Majesty English, and desiring nothing less than that France should not grow great: He both by own Fancy and his youthfull Governors, embracing all ambitious Hopes; having Alexanders Image in his Head, but, perhaps, evil painted: Your Majesty with excellent Virtue, taught what you should hope, and by no less Wisdom, what you may Hope; with a Council renowned over all Christendom, for their well-temperd Minds, hav-

ing set the utmost of their Ambition in your Fa- A Let-
vour, and the Study of their Souls, in your Safety. ter to

Fear hath as little Shew of outward Appearance, as Reason, to match you together; for in Queen
this Estate he is in, whom should he fear, his Bro- Eliza-
ther; alas! his Brother is afraid, since the King of beth

Navar is to step into his Place. Neither can his Brother be the safer by his Fall, but he may be the greater by his Brothers; whereto, whether you will be an Accessary, you are to determine. The King of Spain certainly cannot make Warr upon him, but it must be upon all the Crown of France, which is no Likelyhood he will do: Well may Monsieur (as he hath done) seek to enlarge the Bounds of France upon this State; which likewise, whether it be safe for you to be a Countenance to, any other Way, may be seen: So that if neither Desire nor Fear be such in him, as are to bind any publick Fastness, it may be said, that the only Fortress of this your Marriage, is of his private Affection; a Thing too incident to the Person, laying it up in such Knots.

The other Objection of Contempt in the Subjects: I assure your Majesty, if I had heard it proceed out of your Mouth, which of all other I do most dearly reverence, it would as soon (considering the Perfections of Body and Mind, have set all Mens Eyes by the Height of your Estate) have come to the Possibility of my Imagination, if one should have told me on the contrary Side, that

A Letter to the greatest Princess of the World, should envy
Queen Elizabeth the State of some poor deformed Pilgrim. What
is there, either within you or without you, that
can possibly fall into the Danger of Contempt,
to whom Fortunes are tyed by so long Descent
of your Royal Ancestors? But our Minds rejoyce
with the Experience of your inward Virtues, and
our Eyes are delighted with the Sight of you.
But because your own Eyes cannot see yourself,
neither can there be in the World any Example
fit to blase you by, I beseech you vouchsafe to
weigh the Grounds thereof. The naturall Causes
are Length of Government, and Uncertainty of
Succession: The Effects, as you term them, ap-
pear by cherishing some abominable Speeches,
which some hellish Minds have uttered. The
longer a Prince reigneth, it is certain the more he
is esteemed; there is no Man ever was weary of
well-being. And Good encreased to Good, mak-
eth the same Good, both greater and stronger;
for it useth Men to know no other Cares, when
either Men are born in the Time, and so never
saw other; or have spent much of their flourish-
ing Time, and so have no Joy to seek other; in
evil Princes, Abuse growing upon Abuse, accord-
ing to the Nature of Evil; with the Encrease of
Time, ruins itself. But in so rare a Government,
where Neighbours Fires give us Light to see our
Quietness, where nothing wants that true Ad-
ministration of Justice brings forth; certainly the

Length of Time, rather breeds a Mind to think there is no other Life, but in it, than that there is any Tediousness in so fruitfull a Government. Examples of good Princes do ever confirm this, who the longer they lived, the deeper they sunk into their Subjects Hearts. Neither will I trouble you with Examples, being so many and manifest. Look into your own Estate, how willingly they grant, and how dutifully they pay such Subsidies, as you demand of them: How they are no less troublesome to your Majesty in certain Requests, than they were in the Beginning of your Reign; and your Majesty shall find you have a People more than ever devoted to you.

A Letter to
Queen
Elizabeth

As for the Uncertainty of Succession, although for mine own Part I have cast the utmost Anchor of my Hope; yet for England's Sake, I would not say anything against such Determination; but that uncertain Good should bring a Contempt to a certain Good, I think it is beyond all Reach of Reason; nay because if there were no other Cause (as there are infinite) common Reason and Profit would teach us to hold that Jewel dear, the Loss of which would bring us to we know not what; which likewise is to be said of your Majesties Speech of the Rising Sun; a Speech first used by Sylla to Pompey, in Rome, as then a popular Citty, where indeed Men were to rise and fall, according to the Flourish and Breath of a many headed Confusion. But in so lineal a Mon-

A Letter to Queen Elizabeth archy, where ever the Infants suck the Love of their rightfull Prince, who would leave the Beams of so fair a Sun, for the dreadfull Expectation of a divided Company of Stars: Virtue and Justice are the only Bonds of Peoples Love; and as for that Point, many Princes have lost their Crowns, whose own Children were manifest Successors; and some that had their own Children used as Instruments of their Ruin; not that I deny the Bliss of Children, but only to shew Religion and Equity to be of themselves sufficient Stays. Neither is the Love born in the Queen your Sisters Days, any Contradiction hereunto; for she was the Oppressor of that Religion, which lived in many Mens Hearts, and whereof you were known to be the Favourer; by her Loss was the most excellent Prince in the World to succeed; by your Loss, all Blindness light upon him, that sees not our Misery. Lastly, and most properly for this Purpose, she had made an odious Marriage with a Stranger (which is now in Question whether your Majestie shall do or no) so that if your Subjects do at this Time look for any Afterchance, it is but as the Pilot doth to the Shipboat, if his Ship should perish; driven by Extremity to the one, but as long as he can with his Life, tending the other. And this I say, not only for the lively Parts that be in you; but even for their own Sakes, for they must needs see what Tempests threaten them.

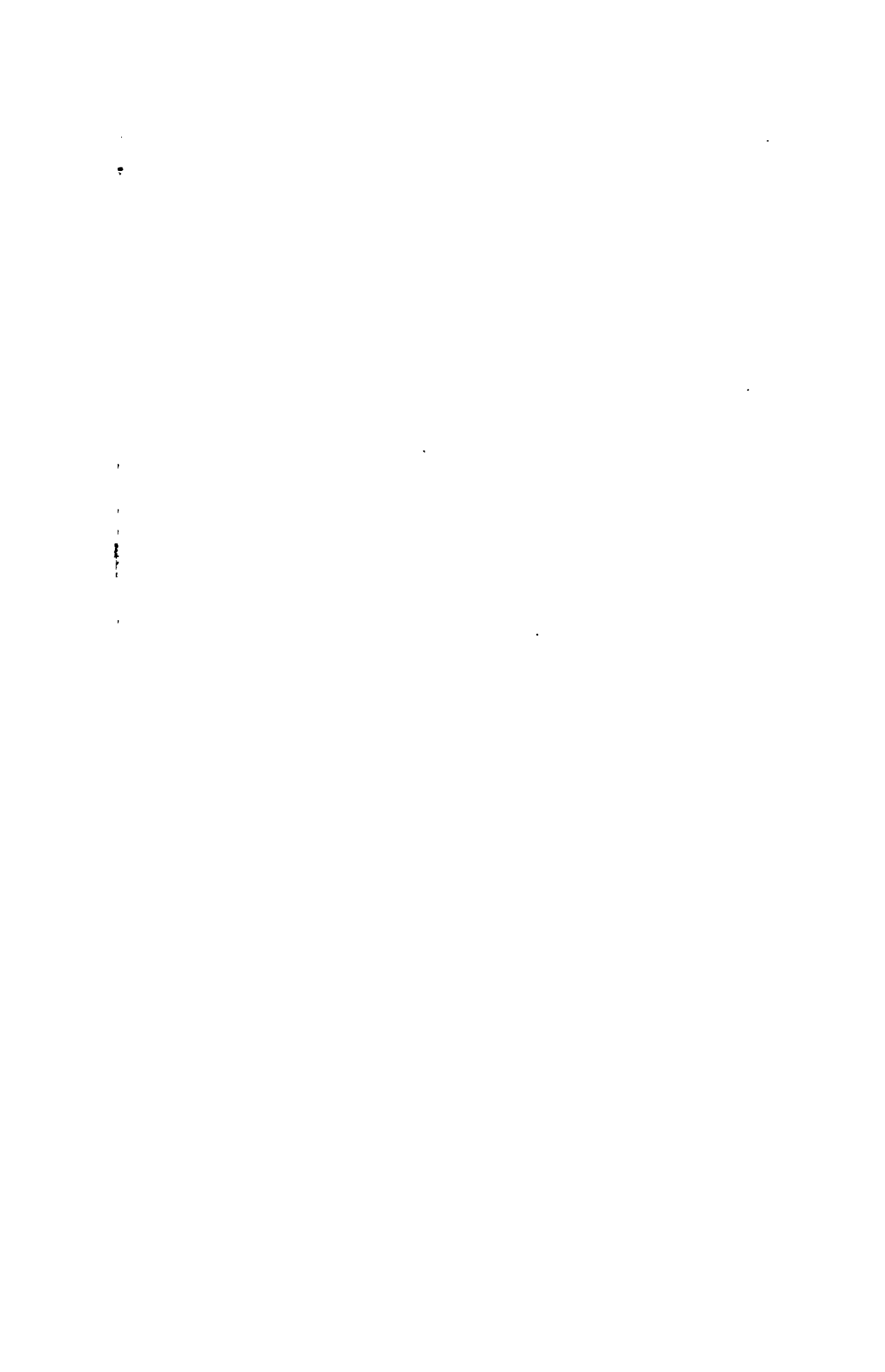
The last Proof in this Contempt, should be the A Let-
venemous Matter, certain Men imposthum'd with ter to
Wickedness should utter against you. Certainly Queen
not to be evil spoken of, neither Christs Holiness, nor Cæsar's Might, could ever prevent or Eliza-
warrant; there being for that no other Rule than beth
so to do, as that they may not justly say Evil
of you; which whether your Majesty have not
done, I leave it in you, to the Sincereness of your
own Conscience, and Wisdom of your Judgment
in the World, to your most manifest Fruits and
Fame throughout Europe. Augustus was told,
that Men speake of him much Hurt: "It is no Mat-
ter," said he, "so long as they cannot do much
Hurt." And lastly Charles V, to one that told him,
"Les Hollandois parlent mal; maiz ilz patient
bien," answered he. I might make a scholar-like
Reckoning of many such Examples; it sufficeth
that these great Princes knew well enough upon
what Way they flew, and cared little for the Bark-
ing of a few Currs: And truly in the Behalf of
your Subjects, I durst with my Blood answer it,
that there was never Monarch held in more pre-
cious Reckoning of her People; and before God
how can it be otherwise? For mine own Part,
when I hear some lost Wretch hath defiled such a
Name with his Mouth, I consider the right Name
of Blasphemy, whose unbridled Soul doth de-
light to deprave that, which is accounted gen-
erally most high and holy. No, no, most excellent

A Letter to the Queen Elizabeth
Lady, do not raze out the Impression you have made in such a Multitude of Hearts; and let not the Scum of such vile Minds, bear any Witness against your Subjects Devotions: Which to proceed one Point further, if it were otherwise, could little be helped, but rather nourished, and in Effect began by this. The only Meanes of avoiding Contempt, are Love and Fear; Love, as you have by divers Meanes sent into the Depth of their Souls; so if anything can stain so true a Form, it must be the Trimming your self, not in your own Likeness, but in new Colours unto them; their Fear by him cannot be encreased, without the Appearance of Frenche Forces, the manifest Death of your Estate; but well may it against him, bear that Face, which (as the tragick Seneca saith) Metus in authorem redit, as because both in Will and Power, he is like enough to do Harm. Since then it is dangerous for your State, as well because by inward Weakness (principally caused by Division) it is fit to receive Harm; since to your Person it can be no Way comfortable, you not desiring Marriage; and neither to Person nor Estate, he is to bring any more Good than any Body; but more Evil he may, since the Causes that should drive you to this, are either Fears of that which cannot happen, or by this Meanes cannot be prevented: I do with most humble Heart say unto your Majestie (having assayed this dangerous Help) for your Standing alone,

you must take it for a singular Honour God hath done you, to be indeed the only Protector of his Church; and yet in worldly Respects your Kingdom very sufficient so to do, if you make that Religion, upon which you stand, to carry the only Strength, and have Abroad those that still maintain the same Course; who as long as they may be kept from utter Falling, your Majesty is sure enough from your mightiest Enemies. As for this Man, as long as he is but Monsieur in Might, and a Papist in Profession, he neither can, nor will, greatly shield you; and if he get once to be King, his Defence will be like Ajax's Shield, which rather weighed them down, than defended those that bare it. Against Contempt, if there be any, which I will never believe, let your excellent Virtues of Piety, Justice, and Liberality, daily, if it be possible, more and more shine. Let such particular Actions be found out (which be easy as I think to be done) by which you may gratify all the Hearts of your People: Let those in whom you find Trust, and to whom you have comitted Trust, in your weighty Affairs, be held up in the Eyes of your Subjects: Lastly, doing as you do, you shall be as you be, the Example of Princes, the Ornament of this Age, and the most excellent Fruit of your Progenitors, and the perfect Mirror of your Posterity. Your Majesties faythfull, humble, and obedient Subject,

A Letter to
Queen
Elizabeth

P. Sydney.



A DISCOURSE IN DEFENCE OF THE
EARLE OF LEICESTER

Anno 1584



A DISCOURSE IN DEFENCE OF THE
EARLE OF LEICESTER

* *
* *



F late there hath been printed a Book, in Form of Dialog, to the Defaming of the Earl of Lester, full of the most vile Reproches, which a Witt used to wicked and filthy Thoughtes can imagin. In such Manner truly, that if the Autor had as well fained new Names, as he doth new Matters, a Man might well have thought his only Meaning had been, to have given a lively Picture of the uttermost Degree of Railing. A Thing contemtible in the Doer, as proceeding from a base and wretched Tong, and such a Tong, as, in the Speaking, dares not speak his own Name. Odious to all Estates, since no Man beares a Name, of which Name, how unfitly so ever to the Person, by an impudent Lier, anything may not be spoken; by all good Laws sharply punished, and by all civill Companies, like a poisonous Serpent avoided. But to the Earl himself, in the Eyes of any Men, who, with cleer Judgments, can value Things, a true and sound Honour grows out of these dishonourable Falshods. Since he may justly say, as a worthy Senatour of Rome once in like Case did, That no Man, these twenty

A De-
fence of
Leicester

Yeeres, hath born a hatefull Hart to this Estate, but that, at the same Time, he hath shewd his Enmity to this Earl; testefying it hereby, that his Faith is so linked to her Majesties Service, that who goes about to undermine the one, resolveth withall to overthrow the other. For it is not now, first that evill contented, and evill minded Persons, before the Occasion be ripe for them, to shew their Hate against the Prince, do first vomitt it out against his Councelours; nay certainly, so stale a Devise it is, as it is to be mervailed, that so fine Witts, whose Inventions a fugitive Fortune hath sharpned, and the Air of Italy perchance purified, can light uppon no gallanter Way, then the ordinary Pretext of the very clownish Rebellious. And yet that this is their Plott of late, by Name, first to publish somthing against the Earl of Lester, and after, when Time served, against the Queenes Majesty, by some of their own intercepted Discourses, is made to manifest. He himself, in some Places, bringes in the Examples of Gaveston, Earl of Cornwall, Robert Vere, Duke of Ireland, and Delapool, Duke of Suffolk. It is not my Purpose to defend them, but I would fain know, whether they that persecuted those Councelours, when they had had their Will in ruining them, whether their Rage ceased, before they had as well destroyed the Kinges themselves, Edward, and Richard the Second, and Henry the Sixt? The old Tale testefieth, that the

Wolves, that mean to destroy the Flock, hate most
the trewest and valiantest Dogges. Therefore the
more the filthy Empostume of their wolvish Mal-
ice breakes forth, the more undoutedly doth it
rais this well deserved Glory to the Earl, that who
hates England, and the Queen, must also withall
hate the Earl of Lester. A De-
fence of
Leicester

And as for the Libell itself, such is it, as neither
in respect of the Writer, nor Matter written, can
move, I think, the lightest Witts to give thereto
Credditt, to the Discredditt of so worthy a Per-
son. For the Writer (whom in Truth I know not,
and, loth to fail, am not willing to guess at) shews
yet well enough, of what Kenell he is, that dares
not testefy his own Writinges, with his own
Name. And which is more base—(if anything
can be more base then a diffamatory Libeller)
he counterfaites himself, in all the Treatis, a Pro-
testant, when any Man, with Haulf an Eye, may
easily see he is of the other Party; which filthy
Dissimulation, if few honest Men of that Religion
will use, to the Helping of them selves, of how
many Carrets of Honesty is this Man, that useth it
(as much as his poor Powr can) to the Harm of
another. And lastly, evident enough it is, to any
Man that reedes it, what Poison he meanes to
her Majesty, in how golden a Cup so ever he
dress it.

For the Matter written, so full of horrible Vil-
leinies, as no good Hart will think possible to en-

A De-
fence of
Leicester

ter into any Creature, much less to be likely in
so noble and well known a Man as he is, onely
thus accused to be by the railing Oratory of a
shameles Libeller. Perchaunce he had redd the
Rule of that Sycophant, that one should bakbite
boldly; for, tho the Bite wear healed, yet the Skar
would remain: But sure that Scoolmaster of his
would more conningly have carried it, leaving
som Shaddows of Good, or, at least, leaving out
som Evill, that his Treatis might have carried
som probable Shew of it: For as reasonable Com-
mendation wins Beleef, and excessive getts only
the Praiser the Title of a Flatterer; so much more
in this far wors Degree of Lying, it may well
rebound uppon himself, the vile Reproch of a
Railer, but never can sink into any good Mind.
The Suspicion of any such unspeakable Mis-
cheevs, especially it beeing every Mans Case,
even from the Meanest to the Highest, whereof
we daily see odious Examples, that even of the
great Princes, the deer Riches of a good Name
are sought in such Sort to be pickt away by such
Night Theeves. For thorow the whole Book, what
is it else, but such a Bundle of Railinges, as if it
came from the Mouth of som haulf drunk Skold
in a Tavern, not regarding while Evill weare spo-
ken, what was fitt for the Person of whome the
Railing was, so the Wordes wear fitt for the Per-
son of an outragious Railer. Dissimulation, Hipo-
crisy, Adultery, Falshod, Trechery, Poison, Re-

bellion, Treason, Cowardis, Atheism, and what A De-
not, and all still so uppon the Superlative, that it fence of
was no Mervail, though the good Lawyer, he Leicester
speaks of, made many a Cros to keep him from
such a Father of lies, and in many excellent Giftes,
passing all shameles Skoldes, in one he passeth
himself with an unheard-of impudence, bringing
Persons, yet alive, to speak Things which they
are redde to depose, uppon their salvation, never
came in their Thoughtes. Such a Gentlewoman
spake of a Matter no less then Treason, belike she
whispred, yet he heard her; such two Knightes
spake together of thinges not fitt to call Witnesses
to, yet this Asses Eares wear so long, that he
heard them. And yet see his good Nature all this
While would never reveal them till now, for Se-
crecy Sake, he puts them foorth in Print; certainly
such a Quality in a Railer, as I think never was
heard of, to name Persons alive, as not onely can,
but do disprove his Falshods, and yet, with such
Familiarity, to name them. Without he learnd
it of Pace, the Duke of Norfolkes Fool, for he,
when he had used his Tong, as this Heir of his
hath don his Pen, of the noblest Persons, som-
times of the Duke himself, the next that came
fitly in his Way, he would say he had told it him,
of abundance of Charity, not onely to slaunder,
but to make bate. What therefore can be said to
such a Man? Or who lives there, even Christ him-
self, but that so stinking a Breath may blow In-

A Defence of Leicester
famy upon? Who hath a Father, by whose Death the Son enherits, but such a nameles Historien may say his Son poisend him? Where may two talk together, but such a Spirit of Revelation may surmize they spake of Treason? What need more, or why so much? As though I douted that any would build Beleef upon such a durty Seat, onely when he, to borrow a little of his Inkhorn, when he plays the statist, wringing very unluckily some of Machiavels Axiomes to serve his Purpos then indeed; then he triumphes. Why then the Earl of Lester meanes and plots to be King him self, but first to rebell from the Prince to whome he is most bound, and of whome he onely dependeth, and then to make the Earl of Huntington King, and then to putt him down, and then to make him self. Certainly, Sir, you shoot fair, I think no Man, that hath Witt and Power to pronounce this Word England, but wil pity a Sycophant so weak in his own Faculty. But of the Earl of Huntington, as I think all indifferent Men will cleer him from any such foolish and wicked Entent of Rebellion, so I protest, before the Majesty of God, who will confound all Liers; and before the World, to whome Effectes and Enocency will witnes my Trewth, that I coold never find, in the Earl of Lester, any one Motion of Inclination toward any such pretended Conceat in the Earl of Huntington. I say no Wit futur, for as for the present, or for drawing it to himself, I think

no Devil so wicked, nor no Idiot so simple, as to A De-
conjecture; and yet, beeing to him as I am, I fence of
think I shold have som Air of that, which this gen- Leicester
tle Libelmaker doth so particularly and peece-
meal understand, and I do know the Earls of
Warwick, of Pembroke, my Father, and all the
rest he names there, will answer the like. And
yet such Matters cannot be undertaken, without
good Friendes, nor good Friendes be kept with-
out knowing somthing; but the Earles Mind hath
ever been to serve onely and truly, setting aside
all Hopes, all Feares, his Mistris, by undouted
Right Queen of England, and most worthy to be
the Queen for her royall Excellencies, and most
worthy to be his Queen, having restored his over-
thrown House, and brought him to this case; that
Curs for onely envy bark at. And this his Mind is
not onely (though cheefly) for Faith knitt in Con-
science and Honor, nor onely (though greatly)
for Gratefulness, where al Men know how much
he is bound, but even partly for Wisdomes Sake,
knowing, by all old Lessons and Examples, that,
how welcom soever Treasons bee, Traitors to all
wise Princes are odious, and that, as Mutius an-
swered Tully, who wrote to him how he was
blamed for shewing himself so constant a Frend
to Cæsar, that he douted not, even they that
blamed him would rather choos such Friendes as
he was, then such as they wear. For wise Princes
well know, that these violent Discontentements

A De- arise out of the Parties wicked Humors, as in sick =
fence of Folkes, that think, with Change of Places, to eas =
Leicester their Evill, which indeed is inward, and whome, =
nor this Prince nor that Prince can satisfy, but =
such as are ledd by their Fancies, that is to say =
who leave to be Princes. But this gentle Libel =
maker, because he would make an evident Proof
of an unquencheable Malice, desperat Impudency
and Falshod, which never knew Blusshing, is not
content with a whole Dictionary of Slanders upon
these Persons living, but, as if he would rake upp
the Bones of the Dead, with so apparent Falshods
toucheth their Houses, as if he had been afeard,
els he should not have been streight found in
that wherein he so greatly labours to excell. First,
for Hastings, he saith, the Lord Hastings conspired
the Death of his Maister King Edwardes
Sons; lett any Man but reed the excellent Trea-
tis of Sir Thomas Moor, compare but his Wordes
with this Libelmakers, and then judg him, if he,
who in a Thing so long since printed, and, as any
Man may see by other of his Allegations of him
diligently redd, hath the Face to write so directly
contrary, not caring, as it seemes, though a hun-
dred thousand find his Falshod, so som dosen,
that never redd Sir Thomas Moores Wordes, may
be carried to beleve his horrible Slaunders of
a Nobleman so long ago dead. I sett down the
Wordes of both, because, by this onely lively
Comparison, the Face of his Falshod may be the

better sett foorth. And who then can dout, but he A De-
that lies in a Thing, which, with one Look, is found fence of
a Lie, what he will do, where yet there is though Leicester
as much Falshod, yet not so easy Disproof.

Now to the Dudleys, such is his Bounty, that,
when he hath poured out all his Flood of scold-
ing Eloquence, he saith they are no Gentlemen,
affirming, that the then Duke of Northumberland
was not born so; in Truth, if I shoold have stud-
died with my self of all Pointes of fals Invections,
which a poisenous Tong coold have spitt out
against that Duke, yet would it never have come
into my Hed, of all other Thinges, that any Man
woold have objected Want of Gentry unto him;
but this Fellow doth like him, who, when he had
shot off all his railing Quiver, cald one Cuckold
that was never married, because he woold not be
in Debt to any one evill Word. I am a Dudley in
Blood, that Dukes Daughters Son, and do acknow-
ledg, though, in all Truth, I may justly affirm, that
I am, by my Fathers Side, of ancient, and alwayes
well esteemed and well matched Gentry, yet I
do acknowledge, I say, that my cheefest Honor is
to be a Dudley, and truly am glad to have Cause
to set foorth the Nobility of that Blood whereof
I am descended, which, but uppon so just Cause,
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a Lislay, shoold be douted to be a Gentleman.
But he will say, these great Honors came to him
by his Mother, for these I do not deny they came
so; and that the Mother, beeing an Heir, hath

A De- been, in all Ages and Contreis, sufficient to no-
fence of bilitat, is so manifest, that, even from the Roman
Leicester Time to modern Times, in such Case they might,
if they listed, and so often did use the Mothers
Name; and that Augustus Cæsar had both Name
and Empire of Cæsar, onely by his Mothers Right,
and so both Moderns. But I will claim no such
Priviledg, lett the singular Nobility of his Mother
nothing avail him, if his Fathers Blood wear not,
in all Respectes, worthy to match with hers. If
auncient, undouted, and untouched Nobility be
worthy to match with the most noble House that
can be: This House, therefore, of Dudley, which,
in Despite of all Shamelesnes, he so doth de-
prave, is, at this Day, a Peer, as we tearm it, of
the Realm, a Baron, and, as all English Men know,
a Lord of the Parliament, and so a Companion,
both in Marriage, Parliament, and Triall, to the
greatest Duke that England can bear; so hath it
been ever esteemed, and so, in the Constitutions
of all our Laws and Ordeineinces, it is allwayes
reputed. Dudley House is so, to this Day, and
thus it hath been Time out of Mind; in Harry
the Fifts Time, the Lord Dudley was his Lord
Steward, and did that pittiful Office in bringing
Home, as the cheef Mourner, his victorious Mas-
ters dead Boddy; as who goes but to Westmin-
ster, in the Church may see. I think if we con-
sider together the Time which was of England
the most flourishing, and the King he served,

who, of all Englishe Kinges, was most puissant, A De-
 and the Office he bare, which was, in Effect, as fence of
 great as an English Subject could have, it would Leicester
 seem very strange; so that Lord Dudley, if he
 could out of his Grave heer this Fellow make
 Question, Whether his lawfull Posterity, from
 Father to Son, should be Gentlemen or no? But
 though he onely had been sufficient to erect No-
 bility to his Successors, bringing, as the Romanes
 termed it, so noble an Image into the House,
 yet did he but receive his Nobility from his Aun-
 cestours, who had been Lordes of that very Sei-
 gnory of Dudley Castell, many Descentes be-
 fore, even from King Richarde the First Time;
 at which Time Sir Richard Sutton married the
 Daughter and Heir of the Lord Dudley; since
 which Time all descended of him, as divers
 Branches there bee, left the Name of Sutton, and
 have all been called Dudleys, which is now a-
 bove four hundred Yeeres since; and both those
 Houses, of Sutton, and Dudley, having been be-
 fore that Time of great Nobility; and that Sut-
 ton was a Man of great Honor and Estimation,
 that very Match witnesseth sufficiently, it being
 a dainty Thing in that Time, that one of Saxon
 Blood, as Suttons Name testifieth he was, should
 match with such an Enheritrix as Dudley was;
 the like Example whereof I remember none, but
 the great House of Raby, who matched with
 Nevell, who of that Match, as the Suttons wear

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ter into any Creature, much less to be likely in
so noble and well known a Man as he is, onely
thus accused to be by the railing Oratory of a
shameles Libeller. Perchance he had redd the
Rule of that Sycophant, that one should bakbite
boldly; for, tho the Bite wear healed, yet the Skar
would remain: But sure that Scoolmaster of his
would more conningly have carried it, leaving
som Shaddows of Good, or, at least, leaving out
som Evill, that his Treatis might have carried
som probable Shew of it: For as reasonable Com-
mendation wins Beleef, and excessive getts only
the Praiser the Title of a Flatterer; so much more
in this far wors Degree of Lying, it may well
rebound uppon himself, the vile Reproch of a
Railer, but never can sink into any good Mind.
The Suspicion of any such unspeakable Mis-
cheevs, especially it beeing every Mans Case,
even from the Meanest to the Highest, whereof
we daily see odious Examples, that even of the
great Princes, the deer Riches of a good Name
are sought in such Sort to be pickt away by such
Night Theeves. For thorow the whole Book, what
is it else, but such a Bundle of Railinges, as if it
came from the Mouth of som haulf drunk Skold
in a Tavern, not regarding while Evill weare spo-
ken, what was fitt for the Person of whome the
Railing was, so the Wordes wear fitt for the Per-
son of an outrageous Railer. Dissimulation, Hipoc-
risy, Adultery, Falshod, Trechery, Poison, Re-

bellion, Treason, Cowardis, Atheism, and what A De-
not, and all still so uppon the Superlative, that it fence of
was no Mervail, though the good Lawyer, he Leicester
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Seperating of those Branches (as we see in many ancient Houses, it so falls out, as they are uncertain whether came out of other) then, I say yet, a vaillant Railer may venture uppon a Thing, where, because there is not an absolute certainty, there may bee some Possibility to escape; but, in this Case, where not onely Name and Armes, with onely that Difference, which acknowledgeth our House to be of the yonger Brother, but such Neereness of Blood, as that Edmond Dudleys was no furdre off then Son to the yonger Brother of the same Lord Dudley, and so as he was to be Lord Dudley, if the Lord Dudley had died without Heires; and, by the German and Italien Manner, him self was to have been also called Lord Dudley; that his Father, beeing called John Dudley, married to the Daughter and Heir of Bramshot in Sussex; twas the onely Descent between him and the Lord Dudley, who was his Grandfather; his Great Grandfather beeing that noble Lord Dudley, whome before I mentioned, and no Man need doubt that this Writer doth not onely know the Truthe hereof, but the Proofes of this Truth. This John, Edmond's Father, being buried at Arundel Castell, who married Bramshot, and left that Land to Edmond, and so to the Duke in Sussex, which, after the Duke sold, by Confiscation came to the Crown. This Tomb any Man at Arundel Castell may see. This Bramshot Land I name, a Thing not in the Air, but which any

Man, by the ordinary Course of those Things, A De-
may soone know whether such Land did not suc- fence of
ceed unto Edmond from his Father. So as where Leicester
is this Enheritance of Land, and Monumentes in
Churches, and the Persons them selves little more
then in Mans Memory; truly this Libeller de-
serves many Thankes, that, with his impudent
Falshod, hath given Occasion to set down so ma-
nifest a Truth.

As to the Dudleys, he deals much harder with-
all, but no Whitt truer: But therein I must con-
fess, I can not alleag his uncharitable Triumph-
ing upon the Calamities faln to that House,
though they might well be challenged of a Wri-
ter, of whom any Honesty wear to be expected;
but God forbid I shoold find Fault with that, since,
in all his Book, there is scarce any one Trewth
else. But our House receaved such an Overthrow;
and hath none else in England done so? I will not
seek to wash away that Dishonour with other hon-
orable Tears. I woold this Island wear not so full
of such Examples; and I think, indeed, this Wri-
ter, if he wear known, might in Conscience clear
his Auncestours of any such Disgraces, they were
to low in the Mire to be so thunderstricken; but
this I may justly and boldly affirm, lett the last
Fault of the Duke be buried.

And, in good Faith, now I have so far touched
their, as any Man that list to know a Truth (if at
least there bee any that can dout thereof) may

A De- arise out of the Parties wicked Humors, as in sick
fence of Folkes, that think, with Change of Places, to eas
Leicester their Evill, which indeed is inward, and whome,
nor this Prince nor that Prince can satisfy, but
such as are ledd by their Fancies, that is to say,
who leave to be Princes. But this gentle Libel-
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of an unquenchable Malice, desperat Impudency
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these Persons living, but, as if he woold rake upp
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that wherein he so greatly labours to excell. First,
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no Devil so wicked, nor no Idiot so simple, as to A De-
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think I shold have som Air of that, which this gen- Leicester
tle Libelmaker doth so particularly and peece-
meal understand, and I do know the Earls of
Warwick, of Pembroke, my Father, and all the
rest he names there, will answer the like. And
yet such Matters cannot be undertaken, without
good Friendes, nor good Friendes be kept with-
out knowing somthing; but the Earles Mind hath
ever been to serve onely and truly, setting aside
all Hopes, all Feares, his Mistris, by undouted
Right Queen of England, and most worthy to be
the Queen for her royall Excellencies, and most
worthy to be his Queen, having restored his over-
thrown House, and brought him to this case; that
Curs for onely envy bark at. And this his Mind is
not onely (though cheefly) for Faith knitt in Con-
science and Honor, nor onely (though greatly)
for Gratefulness, where al Men know how much
he is bound, but even partly for Wisdomes Sake,
knowing, by all old Lessons and Examples, that,
how welcom soever Treasons bee, Traitors to all
wise Princes are odious, and that, as Mutius an-
swered Tully, who wrote to him how he was
blamed for shewing himself so constant a Friend
to Cæsar, that he douted not, even they that
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